

# HUMAN BITS

WILLIAM L. HAMILTON





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# HUMAN BITS



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By

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*With illustrations by  
the author*

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*To*  
*Ariadne and Edith*  
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KATHERINE

## The Red Room

“**W**HERE are you two taking me, anyway?” asked Katherine, an American student of painting lately arrived in Paris, of her old friend and her new husband.

“ You treated me to a right good dinner on Boulevard St. Germain, but where now ? ”

“ We are taking you to the Beaux Arts, there it is on your left ! ” said the new husband.

“ Stop teasing, Charles, where are we going ? Please be serious.”

“ We are taking you,” said the flashy, attractive old friend “ to something somewhere in Paris, not French as our dinner was, but *assez* Parisienne, something a wee bit salon-ish, to something where no one is quite natural, where everyone, in fact, is somewhat artificial, where there will be artists of all breeds, something of a mixture, something like me, Katherine, your old friend, journalist by marriage to this rascal, musician by descent, Opera singer by occupation, American by birth, French by adoption.”

“ And rather brainless by nature,” intercepted Katherine, “ Every minute you make my confusion more confounded ; at every step you lead me further from the light. Say no more ! Let me collect my few wits which you have scattered before we arrive at the where and the what you are so incompetent to describe.”

"Don't interrupt me, *ma petite*. Hear me to the end! as said Mark Antony. We are taking you to the salon of a Canadian lady, widow of an American major, some time resident at Greenwich village, where we first knew her, and now in the *Quartier Latin*. There you will meet, among others, a Norwegian architect, a count, or if you like better a count architect, or count Norwegian. But the interesting thing is that he is terribly lonely in Paris and has asked to be presented to a pretty and attractive American girl."

"Tell me more about this widow, and this count, I mean this architect, no I mean this Norwegian, so lonely in Paris. Does he dance, this count? Oh! I mean the Norwegian. Will he take me to dances do you think?"

"Listen to the American, 'the count!' Is that American? Is that democratic? 'Take me to dances!' Well, that rings true, that is Main Street all right. The count will find you sufficiently American, perhaps *trop*. But as to the count's looks and behaviour use your ears and eyes, for here we are at the door of the widow's abode" said the journalist.

They stood before a dingy building in a very crooked and very narrow street. The door opened into an entirely neglected court. Charles lighted the two young women up three flights of broken stone steps, by a succession of lighted matches. They knocked at the door and Mrs. Harper, the major's widow, revealed herself in brilliant red, and in the midst of a flood of red light, in striking contrast to the dreary gloom of the stairs, and a dazzling picture.

*Motif*—a very comely matron with sparkling black eyes, a wealth of jet black hair, parted in the middle and drawn down over the ears, and knotted on her neck.

She kissed Helen on the lips, gave a soft hand to Kather-

ine, and permitted Charles to kiss the other ; deposited the wraps in a small bedroom, and led them into the *red room*.

The scarlet tinted ceiling was supported by white pillars and the red electric bulbs cast a rosy tint over them. The walls were painted red, and all the velvet rugs, divans, and chiffon curtains were of very brilliant red. The symphony was also sustained by the glasses of red wine, and partly emptied bottles, scattered about the room on red silk covered tables, and by the glowing embers in the grate, and by the lighted cigarettes and the azure rings of smoke—Yes, and by the very flushed faces of the guests.

All were acting a part, and each was a part of an exotic whole. Bohemian ? Not entirely. The Continentals were evidently straining themselves to be rid of the courtesies and politenesses of long habit. The Americans, on the other hand, were equally straining themselves to adopt some of the courtly customs of the *ancienne regime*, the men making the deepest bows, and deferentially kissing the hands of the ladies.

Katherine looked and thought : “ Then this is Bohemia ! At any rate I have never seen the like of it before.” Her mind was evidently vague about bohemianism.

Mrs. Harper was a skilful hostess. Her party had disintegrated into little knots, but she managed a pretty constant circulation from one knot to another. Katherine served her purpose well in this regard—and she served Katherine well in turn in the way of getting her acquainted with her personnel—and with the different streams of conversation—that were flowing in all sorts, and in the most divergent directions.

A tall, old painter, with strong features, and a very prominent chin, accentuated by a grey imperial, was dis-

coursing to a group of sceptical ladies about spiritualism, and ectoplasm, the latest development in psychic phenomena.

An art critic was in a lively discussion with two sculptors about the relative merits of Rodin and Dennis Puech. Katherine heard him say: "Both are, or were before Rodin's death, essentially portrait artists—their strongest work was in the human face. And I am bold to say that in depicting human types no one has ever equalled Puech."

"Very good," said one of the sculptors, "but you did well to speak in the past—before Rodin's death. Since then these two have both been dead. Yes, Puech is dead too. Although humanly speaking he is alive and kicking down in Rome. But artistically speaking he is stone dead. Did you see a picture of that war memorial he did for Rodez? Whew!"

"If the old man only knew that he had shot his bolt!" said the other sculptor.

Thus the conversation pursued its way, falling at times to fine points of technique, interesting to artists, but Greek to laymen.

None of it was Greek to Katherine. She was following the conversation point by point with the keenest interest—when Mrs. Harper bore down upon her and carried her off to a miscellaneous group just finishing a discussion of the contemporary stage in France and abroad.

An actress from the Odeon caste thought the English and American actors deficient in the parts calling for the more delicate and subtle shades of interpretation, and quite deficient in bodily expression. At the same time she admitted that her own people exaggerated the finer inflections to the point of weakness, and that the tendency to over-



act required constant curbing.

Someone mentioned the great success of Eugene O'Neals. All God's children have got wings, and his *Emperor Jones*, which scored such successes at the Provence Town Theatre in New York, and which were at the moment meeting with great success in London.

A French playwright here interposed and said: "I have seen *Emperor Jones*. Its success is due to the work of just one member of the caste, and he is a Negro. If the Negro in America had a fair chance," he said, "the world would be surprised at his talent."

Here a Creole journalist from New Orleans interposed: "The Negro has no talent. We Southerners, who know him best, know that his place is in the kitchen or the cotton fields. Some think he can sing. His voice has a degree of melody, but he shows not the least intelligence in the handling of it. If a black man has done a part on the stage that seems well done it is not due to his own intelligence but to the intelligence of his coach. And as for literature, he may write copy, he cannot write sense."

The Frenchman had been fumbling Mrs. Harper's bookshelves while the gentleman from New Orleans was talking. At this moment he thrust forward a book: "Dear Sir, here is your refutation, Rene Meran's *Batuola*—the winner of the Prix de Goncourt for the year past. And do you recall that Alexandre Dumas *fils* was a quadroon, and that Alexandre Dumas *pere* was a mulatto?"

This unexpected turn in the discussion alarmed Katherine. She dreaded lest other aspects of the coloured question would come up and fan the fire in the southern blood, and mayhap utterly spoil Mrs. Harper's party. She felt much relieved when the hostess stepped in at this

critical point and deftly touched another button of conversation with no explosives in it. When she had the new theme well going she led Katherine apart and whispered in her ear—

“Now, my dear, I will take you to that little group of three in the corner. I want you to mark well the gentleman with the stubby beard. He is a Dutch illustrator. Mark also the beautiful lady, his wife. She is French, and her mind and character are as beautiful as her face. You might not discover this because her husband is apt to monopolize the conversation—although always in an interesting way. I want you to know them both and see them together, because they show how very charming an international marriage may be.”

“Who is the other one, the tall handsome blonde young man?” inquired Katherine.

“He is the one you are here to meet, Count von Jensen, the Norwegian architect.”

Then Mrs. Harper deposited Katherine between the illustrator and the architect and went about her other social business.

Katherine slyly glanced at the Norwegian.

“How handsome! What a superb specimen of the hardy Norseman,” was her mental note. He was evidently pleased with her fresh, girlish face, which her simple yellow frock set off to advantage. Both were a bit conscious.

However the moment of awkwardness was precipitately relieved by the Dutchman.

“You are a pupil at the Julien Academy, I believe, Miss Ross. Do throw it up! Forswear masters altogether. The master pedagogy in art is I assure you bad! Wholly bad! The master in spite of himself is only a master of

disciples and imitators, reflections. If you have any originality the master strives first of all to kill it. Atmosphere? Perhaps there is stimulation in the atmosphere of painters working together, but not in an atmosphere of disciples and imitators. Go to the Grand Chemiere, and mark you well, go to the *Atelier libre* where there is no master—only a model, encircled by painters. There you will steal a helpful suggestion now and then by a peep over the shoulders of your fellow workmen—and remember that painters of the highest talent go there to work. This is a work room full of inspiration for all.”

Katherine opened her mouth to contradict the Dutchman but he checked her.

“Yes, yes, Miss Ross, I know what you would say, that the criticism department of the Julien Academy plans to prevent an undue impress of a single master by providing a succession of masters. They will tell you that your first master, Guinee, is a wonderful colourist; and that he will be followed by Royer, a marvellous draughtsman; and he in turn will be followed by Pages, who is exceedingly strong in composition. But, believe me, a composite impress is scarcely better than the one master impress. The pupils of the different schools might be described as the Julien reflex, the Beaux Arts reflex, the Colorossi reflex, and so on.”

“Don’t interrupt me yet I beg of you, Miss Ross—I know exactly what you would say, that the distinctive school types may be avoided in Paris by the Inter-school programme, as forenoons, painting from the nude at Julien, afternoons, portraiture at the Grand Chemiere, and evenings *croquit* at the Collorossi; or one month here and the next month there, etc. But a slave under the master’s lash whether under one or a number of masters, is like to remain

a slave. Yes, great artists have had masters, but they have become artists, not by them but in spite of them. Most pupils remain mere copyists."

"How glad I am that you kept me quiet. I have heard you to the end. Now I am thinking of the Julien star who can draw as well as Royer himself, some think better, and who, after long years, has stolen the palet secrets of Guinee. Both her colouring and her drawing show marvellous skill, but there is nothing original or inspiring in her work. Indeed she has been dubbed Mlle. *Composite*. One of her fellow pupils has described her work chemically as  $R_1 + G_1 = C_1$ ."

"What do I hear?" interrupted Mrs. Harper, bringing Aileen and Charles with the obvious purpose of interrupting a too long protracted *tete a tete*. "So this *tout petite* American is talking chemistry to a Dutch artist."

"I have been convincing Miss Ross of the falsity of the prevailing art pedagogy, Mrs. Harper," said the illustrator.

"Riding your old hobby as usual, but Katherine, the proof is right here. Look at those landscapes! He did them, and he claims that he never had a master in his life."

"It isn't quite polite," she continued, "to miss someone amid so many delightful people, but I am pained that Roux is not here."

"It is all my fault," admitted Helen, "he was offended this afternoon at the salon because I dragged you and Charles from the room where his pictures are hung. I never had much appreciation for painting you know and I was bored hanging around so long in the same place."

"Yes, Mrs. Harper," said Charles, "my wife is always that way. She wants to race through an art exhibition like lightning."

"Oh!" sighed Mrs. Harper, "and Monsieur Roux is extremely sensitive. He feels very hurt if you don't admire his pictures. He cannot bear adverse criticism. He is a great artist. His pictures have won medals in the salons for years. I would so hate to lose his friendship. He is a great asset to my soirées, you know."

"If Roux is lost you still have me, buck up, Mrs. Harper! Have courage!" chirped a tall man with long hair, leaning against the wall with his arms crossed and a pipe in his mouth.

"No one could forget you, sweet Morris," said Mrs. Harper, patting his arm. "You will live for ever. You are indeed immortal. Your paintings will hang in the great museums always."

"I feel like the culprit of the evening," whined Helen. "Won't you please allow me to amount to something in the eyes of all these worth-while people! Please let me sing, Mrs. Harper."

"Certainly, Helen," was the quick reply, "I will permit you to sing in spite of your naughtiness, if you will call on Monsieur and Madame Roux and apologise for your rudeness. Of course you must have an accompanist. Gaston, you left your 'cello the last time you practised here. I will fetch it and you can accompany Helen with your music and your right handsome French face."

"What?" asked Helen, "does our hostess allow you to practise here?"

"Well, yes, she did once when she had to go out for the day. Generally she wants absolute silence while she makes a lot of ugly noises on her typewriter."

"But you know, Gaston, that Mrs. Harper makes beautiful love stories from that ill sounding typewriter,"

corrected Mrs. Anderson, a lecturer on Art History at the Louvre.

Helen was in the truest sense an artist musician. Of her voice, a contralto, strong and yet tender in its sympathy, she was always sure—but that was scarcely half of it. She knew well how to assemble a wee repertoire of pieces that would tune in with the spirits of the company she happened to be in. And as the hostess stood a bit apart and watched her and Gaston—the centre of a charmed circle, all artists, of different kinds and degrees—she thought: “Helen is my trump card. She is giving to my party the most artistic finale possible.”

Katherine noted all the formalities of the leavetakings. On her way home she thought to herself: “Helen promised me an entirely artificial evening, but she herself prevented that, if not with the touch of nature that makes all the world akin, she at least touched a common chord that made that little world in the red room akin.”

She also reflected—“And this Norwegian count, who is seeing me home, just as if we were in America, he is very nice. And he is so polite, attentive and considerate.”

When she had closed the great door to the court of the Women’s Students Club as she wended her way to her room she thought: “I wonder if he will take me to the dances and the theatre.”

Katherine’s father was invited to Mrs. Harper’s next soirée. The atmosphere was again red and clouded with smoke and incense. Again Mrs. Harper kissed Helen on the lips.

She served her guests with tea in glasses *a la Russe*, greatly to the satisfaction of a Russian countess who was present.

Mrs. Harper directly sat down on a cushion beside Katherine and asked,

"Well my dear, how did you find the count?"

"Why he is very much of a gentleman."

"Of course he is a gentleman, and more than that, he is a nobleman, and comes of one of the oldest and best families of Norway. Of course he is a gentleman, but how do you like him?"

"Well, you see I have only known him one evening, and it is rather hard to judge, but he seems very nice."

"You know," continued Mrs. Harper, "I am an aristocrat. Don't laugh! It is true. My ancestors were related to kings, Katherine, and I always like to associate with people of royal and noble blood. How would you like to marry the count?"

Poor Katherine's breath was taken away.

"I don't know him well enough to dream of such a thing."

"Well, he is very much in love with you, and he happens to believe in arranged marriages, that is—arranged by older people—after the French fashion, and he has asked me to ask you if you will marry him. He thinks that it is time for him to marry and he is sure that you are the girl. He has met several eligible girls by my arrangement but you are the first one that has excited his fancy. He is terribly in earnest about this."

After a moment's hesitation Katherine said:

"But, Mrs. Harper, I don't see how I can accept him when I hardly know him at all. Besides I cannot see how he can possibly be in love when he has only seen me once."

"Dear Katherine, continued Mrs. Harper, "he has come to me every evening since you were here to tell me how much he loved you. This evening he is coming a little late to give

me a chance to speak for him to you and your father. Remember that he is twenty-six, quite old enough, handsome, good, and noble. He works now in his brother's office but he is sure before long to be a great architect on his own account."

"If he is only twenty-six he is not terribly old and has plenty of time to find a suitable wife."

"But he wants you, Katherine. Do say yes! You are not already promised to another?"

Katherine quickly seized upon a hypothetical engagement as an excuse.

"Yes, I cannot consider the count for I am engaged," she fibbed.

"What does the father of your fiancé do for a living?"

"I don't know, I never asked him."

"Be careful, his father might own a small grocery shop and be nobody in his community. I presume he is an American. I married an American major in the war you know. I thought I loved him, but when I saw his common looking parents for the first time at his funeral—well, my love and esteem for my deceased husband just disappeared. I felt dreadfully mortified at the thought of having married a man from such a common stock."

Mrs. Harper then turned to Katherine's father who was a retired Professor.

"Professor Ross, is your daughter engaged?"

The Professor did not hear, or pretended not to hear.

"Professor Ross," she said in a louder voice, "there is a charming nobleman coming here this evening whom I am very anxious for you to meet. He has met your daughter you know. He has fallen in love with her. He wants to marry her. He believes in the conventional French way



of arranging marriages for young people. Don't you yourself believe, Professor Ross, that older people have much better judgment in such matters? The count is a very fine, upright young man. I have known his brother for years—in short, dear Professor, Count von Jensen presents himself as a suitor for the hand of your charming daughter. What shall I tell him?"

The Professor broke out laughing—"So a Norwegian count wants to marry Katherine?"

Mrs. Harper was not well pleased but the thread was broken by a knock at the door, and the subject of the discussion was formally presented to Professor Ross.

Then Mrs. Harper joined Charles, the journalist, and said, "I have this day done a good piece of work. Congratulate me! Adolph asked me to ask Katherine if she would marry him—and she straightway—right off the reel—said 'Yes.'"

The last words reached Katherine's astonished ears.

Then Mrs. Harper hurriedly passed to Adolph, and Katherine heard every word.

"You lucky rascal. She has said yes. Be sure that you tell your brother that I did this for you. And now go and talk to Katherine."

She saw Adolph's face light up with smiles.

When he joined her she felt like a mouse in a trap, and was too embarrassed to speak to him or look at him. She sat staring vacantly into the live coals, while he talked of pretty villas in the suburbs of Paris, house furnishings, and such suggestive topics.

She was wondering:

"This man thinks that I have consented to be his wife. Mrs. Harper is spreading the gossip among her friends. I

don't think that I ever did really say 'no.' How am I going to extricate myself from this muddle?"

She was timid and hated to hurt Adolf's pride by saying a firm "no" to him. When she was walking home with her father she thought of her French friends who were crazy to find husbands.

"Father, how about Count von Jensen marrying Josephine or Germaine?"

"No, daughter, they wouldn't do."

"But, Father, what excuse can I give to Count von Jensen for refusing him?"

"You don't need to give any excuse, Katherine, all you need say is, no! no! no!"

Some days later Katherine made a party call on Mrs. Harper. She found her at the typewriter in an old working smock. Papers were scattered everywhere around her. Very little daylight penetrated her window. The room was clouded as usual with blue smoke. Cigarette stubs were massed high on an ash tray. A few live coals glowed in the grate and radiated the red colour through the red room as usual. But there were no painters, writers, and musicians scattered about the floor. The house had lost its former soul—another spirit inhabited it.

She kissed Katherine affectionately.

"Mrs. Harper, I really meant it when I said that I could not marry the count. At your party somehow I felt that you seemed to think, and allowed others to think, that I would marry him,"

"Poor, dear, little Katherine, you look very worried and distressed. You must think me a queer *butinski* trying to marry you off to Adolf, but you must listen while I tell you my personal interest in this little affair. I have known

Adolf's brother for years. When I was a girl in Paris I asserted my independence, studied in the Sorbonne and breathed the breath of liberty in this French republic. Adolf's brother wanted to marry me, but I couldn't part from my beloved freedom. Marriage sounded to me like bondage and I persistently refused his proposals. Out of desperation he finally married a bad French woman who has filled his life with misery. When I see him now he accuses me of causing him his unhappiness, because he says, if I had only come to my senses, we would both have been happily married. I often repent of my stubbornness, because he was really the romance of my life. And now that he has a younger brother with the will to marry I wish to atone as far as possible for my cruelty to my old suitor by finding him a suitable wife. I thought that you, being an American, would jump at the chance to wed a nobleman. Most American girls do you know."

"This is very interesting, Mrs. Harper, but tell me if you were an independent, modern, batchelor girl how came you to be the widow of an American major?" asked Katherine.

"Here is the story," said Mrs. Harper. "When the war broke out I was contributing short stories to English and American magazines. But beyond all that I was very pretty, and a pretty woman has hard times avoiding the attentions of men."

"And so your independent and studious qualities failed to persist," snapped Katherine.

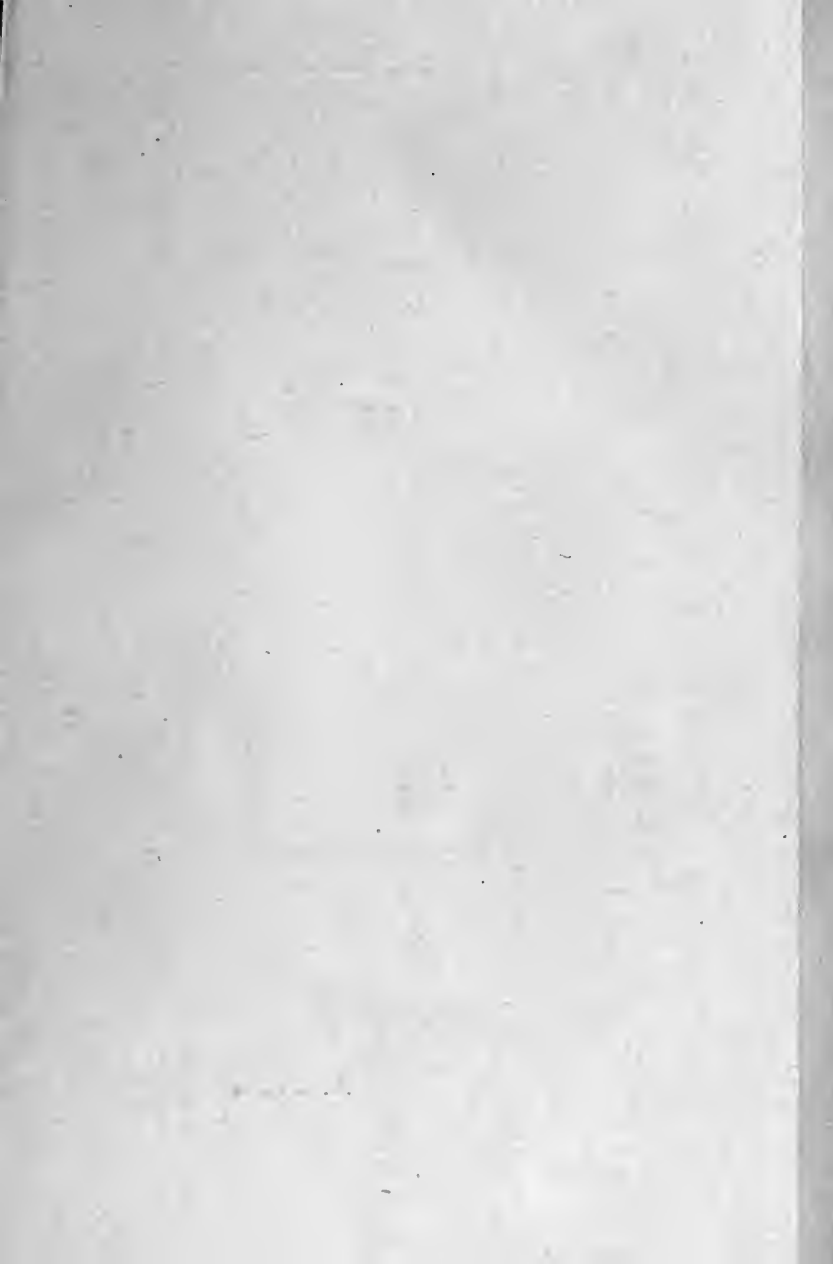
"Yes, they failed to persist for a time, during my short married life, but since the death of my husband I have regained my independence and resumed my literary occupation in Paris.

But to return to Adolf, I do want you to make him happy

for his brother's sake. Of course you have no earthly interest in his brother, but my dear, Adolf would make you a splendid husband. And are you not the least bit excited about his being a nobleman? You Americans seem very soft in that matter. Don't you read every day in the society columns of the *New York Herald* and the *Chicago Tribune* about the doings of baronesses, countesses, marquises, duchesses, and all that? The American papers in Paris give far more attention to the nobility than the *Daily Mail*. And the French papers give none at all. Your indifference indeed surprises me."

"I know, Mrs. Harper, I feel ashamed of my fellow-countrymen when I read such stuff in our American newspapers. Perhaps I am an exception."

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ANDRÉE

## Andr  e sans dot

ANDR  E was a pretty, plump girl from the Pyrenees. She was by occupation a teacher in an elementary school in Paris ; incidentally she was a student of the violin, and took one lesson a week, which assured her residence in the *Cercle Amicitia*, the present name attached to one of the court palaces which flourished under Louis XIII.

A large committee of rich Protestant women have converted it into a well-ordered home for girl students. It was like Andr  e to seek residence here, where it was at once comfortable, with large reception rooms and garden, economical, and very proper. She was here as a student ; and indeed she preferred to be generally known as a student for reasons of her own. Even a casual observer of Andr  e must soon have discovered that all her conduct was according to method. She was a total stranger to caprice.

Andr  e found social opportunities in the French capital. Among others she was invited to all the functions of the *Soci  t   des Dames Coloniales*, where one is sure to meet nice people, and where every convention is observed. Here girls, of nice families, with chaperones, meet boys of good families—and good prospects. Well, is social diversion an end in itself—or should it be designed and fashioned as an avenue of approach to things really important ?

In French society, the gown is a consideration, but its effect is always and everywhere subordinated to the *tout ensemble*, to its relations to the bodily form, flexibility, and agility, the complexion, colour of the hair and eyes ; it must even harmonize with the voice and accent, and mobility of facial features. Andrée, in preparing her wardrobe, thought of all these things.

At these particular balls there were always a group of men who wore the most fetching garb, dark blue uniforms, and swords. They were members of the *Ecole Polytechnique*, and were in training to be engineers and officers, careers held in the highest esteem. They danced with Andrée, made their polite bows, and passed on to honour other maidens with their attentions.

Andrée instructed her devoted girl friends to inform their dancing partners that she was a student, and to say nothing about teaching. She knew that her countrymen were considerate of *dots*, but she also knew that it sometimes happens that even a Frenchman finds himself hopelessly in love before he discovers that the exciting cause is *sans dot*.

This was precisely the foundation of Andrée's hopes. She was beautifully gowned, graceful in every movement, and her face was illuminated by ravishing smiles. Many would have called her the most charming creature there.

Andrée's girl friends deeply sympathised with her aspirations and entirely respected her methods. Suzanne, one of her friends, arranged to have her meet her old friend Gaston at the second ball of the season. Suzanne had described, "Gaston is fair, slim and handsome ; *aussi riche*, and an owner of a fine house on the Champs Elysée, with a wine-cellar, oh ! such a wine-cellar ! Andrée, you will like him ; and he will be unable to resist you. Who can ? you most



charming creature ! ”

Andrée soon hoped, almost believed, that Suzanne was a true prophet. Gaston asked for every dance on her program and she did look so sweet in a sleeveless black velvet gown, and, indeed, made herself entirely charming. She was always a mistress of this art—in the presence of an eligible ; and now she bent all her energy to the task.

It was the same story at the next ball, and again she gave Gaston every dance. This time Andrée's chaperone protested : “ You must dance with others, my dear ! What will people think of Gaston's monopoly ? ”

Andrée kept her thoughts to herself and said : “ We like to dance together, and that is all.” She later told Edith, an American friend, that she felt like saying : “ Madame, your motives are sinister ; you have a daughter ! ”

Gaston managed to have Andrée, Edith, and Suzanne at the New Year's Eve ball of the Société des Ancienne membres de l'Ecole. He also manoeuvred to have two of his particular friends look after Edith and Suzanne, and these three couples danced through the hours. It had been a merry party, and they tripped along the Champs Elysée with happy hearts on their way home.

Gaston also manoeuvred dinner parties about twice a week—under proper chaperonage, of course. One soon learned not to neglect a single French convention where Andrée was concerned.

Some months previously to the meeting with Gaston, Edith had taken Andrée out with two Americans, Rhodes scholars of Oxford University ; and Martin, of Texas, seemed especially pleased with her. He even called her “ charming,” which is, for an American, a bit strong ! He wrote her occasionally in term time. Andrée was flattered

by his letters and shewed them to all her friends. But when the boys returned to Paris in the spring vacation, Andrée was reluctant to go to Montmartre with them and Edith, and to the *Moulin de la Gallette*, where Apache girls dance and flirt. She was afraid Gaston would hear of it.

Edith asked Martin to go to a Sunday afternoon Society dance with her and Andrée; but when Sunday came she fell ill, and begged Andrée to let her off.

"Please come, Edith," said Andrée anxiously.

"No, I really shouldn't go," said Edith, "you go alone with Martin."

"No, Edith, I can't go alone with him. What would Gaston think? He would lose his respect for me if he saw me come alone with a man. You must come."

"All right, to please you I will; but as soon as Gaston sees that I came with you, I shall leave you."

It was an afternoon ball in an immense hall, all white and gilt. The gentlemen were in dress suits and the ladies in light-coloured silk dresses just as if it were an evening affair. The chaperones, as usual, lined the walls, and, as usual also, covered every vacant seat with scarves and fans, thus reserving them for their daughters, who used them very little.

Edith, after a thorough search, found a seat. Young men she had never seen before, came, as the custom is, made their bows, asking her to dance with them; but she thanked them and refused. Martin danced several times with Andrée while she strained her head in every direction, in search of Gaston. Martin noticed someone else was in her thoughts, and naturally, his vanity was piqued.

Suddenly Edith saw Gaston walking with a pretty girl in a blue pastel frock, and when he spied her in the corner

he rushed over to her.

"I am charmed to see you, Mademoiselle, how are you to-day? It is crowded, isn't it? If there were only fewer couples it would be easy to dance. May I have this waltz?"

"Thank you, but I am not dancing. I feel unfit," said Edith. They exchanged a few more pleasantries, and then he returned to the girl in the pastel gown.

Edith then seized her first opportunity to say to Andrée, "Gaston has seen me and now I will leave."

"Oh, Gaston saw you! Did he ask you where I was?" asked Andrée excitedly. "Tell me all he said."

Edith was embarrassed as to what to say, because he had not mentioned her name.

"Why, he came and shook hands with me; and now, Andrée, I have kept my bargain by staying until he saw me, so please keep yours and permit me to leave."

Edith went home and lay down. Soon, however, a crowd of girls flooded her room and besieged her with questions.

"Did Andrée look pretty? She spent a deal of money out of her earnings to buy the pink satin gown, covered with cream lace, that Gaston might see her in something new. She was worried lest he was tired of her black velvet," said Anne Marie.

"Did he seem attentive to Andrée?" asked Baba. "And did he take every dance as usual?" asked Antoinette.

"What are you girls so excited about, anyway? Why this sudden gust of questions?" asked Edith.

"Well, you see, one explained, we were worried and Andrée was also fearful lest this ball would not be a success. We didn't know if Gaston would—well, we were worried, anyway."

"I expect Andrée will tell you all about it when she comes home," said Edith, not wishing to gossip about her friend.

At about seven-thirty, Andrée called from the court up at Edith's window, asking her to come down, as Martin wished to speak with her.

Edith walked with Martin along the path of the beautiful Amicitia gardens which was enclosed by a high ivy-covered wall. The poor youth seemed to be in a depressed state of mind.

"Well, I don't think much of French dances, Edith," he said. "It was hot and stuffy there, and—"

"I am sorry," replied Edith. "I had hoped you would enjoy a conventional French party."

"No, I didn't, and then Andrée was always looking for some man, and she seemed to be distressed the whole time."

Always after that, Martin and other Rhodes scholars asked Edith to bring American girls to their parties. This offended Andrée, and she told the girls of the Amicitia, who were all French except Edith, that he was very rude not to invite her any more. When, some months later, Martin and his friends were in the court with Edith, Andrée spied him from a window. Martin beckoned to her to come down, but she vanished. She afterwards told Edith that she wished to punish him for his neglect of her.

But to return to the evening after the distressing Sunday ball. Andrée came to Edith's room and poured out her sorrow. She was humiliated; her vanity was sorely wounded. Her pride could not restrain her. She must describe her emotions to Edith's sympathetic ear. They say the French are subtle, but many are as naive and simple as children.

"Edith," wailed Andrée, "Gaston never came near me

all the afternoon—from two until seven. He danced continually with another girl. He didn't look at me the whole time. I saw him laugh and talk with her and I felt miserable. What do you think can be the cause of his neglect? You know how attentive he used to be. Am I no longer pretty?"

"Yes, Andrée, you are very pretty. Now dry your eyes and cool off. Your cheeks are awfully flushed."

"He did shake hands with my chaperone and she meaningly asked him,

"Do you find Andrée as pretty to-day as other times?" And he answered stiffly:

"Yes, just as pretty," and went away with that other girl. Do you think that she is good looking? I don't think so. What shall I do? Shall I write him a note and ask him to explain his conduct?"

"You might ask him if you have offended him in any way," suggested Edith.

From Edith's room Andrée went to Germaine, the vamp among the girls. She was not much liked by them, but they recognised that she had success with men. Germaine was a student of dentistry, had a hard face with an abundance of powder and rouge. Andrée hoped through her to acquire the art to win back Gaston.

Some weeks later Edith asked Andrée if Gaston had apologised.

"I asked Suzanne to ask him for an explanation and he told her that a friend of his family had come from the provinces and he felt obliged to entertain her at the ball."

At last pride had prompted Andrée to withdraw into her shell, but her friends still raged against Suzanne for introducing Gaston, whom they considered a miserable flirt.

Probably Gaston realized Andrée possessed no *dot* or prospect of one, and although he enjoyed her society he considered that he had better withdraw and end all romantic fancies.

Andrée was a good, serious girl, sensible to pleasure ; but, to her, social diversion was not an end in itself, but a means to an end, an avenue of approach to marriage, domesticity. From little remarks which she may have let drop perhaps Gaston was led to suspect that matrimony was in the back of her mind. He may have felt it wise, and even kind, to part with her suddenly, and dissipate any vain hopes. He may not have considered the severe pain she was to suffer. Or again, he may have been fickle and have conceived a sudden infatuation for the pretty lady in the pastel gown.

In any case he might have managed his exit from the little drama with better and kinder art.

A month or so after, the storm had blown over. Henriette, another of Andrée's faithful friends, invited her to be a bridesmaid at her wedding.

" I have found the man for you," said the bride as she grasped Andrée's hand in the vestibule of the church.

" He is best man and will lead you up the aisle, and will later lead you to all the people when you take up the collection. He is a great friend of my husband, soon to be, and is a nice little engineer."

After the wedding the reception was held in the bride's father's home. The engineer devoted himself entirely to Andrée. They danced, drank champagne, and ate delicious pastries.

After her recent unfortunate experience she was a little distrustful of his attentions.

A few days later, after her *voyage de Noces*, came a letter

from the bride :

“ My dearest Andrée,

My husband's best man tells me that he finds in his heart an unmistakable sentiment for you and wishes to know how you feel. He is an engineer, a man of good social position, has a blameless character, and is thoroughly recommendable.

Please write me soon,

Your loving

HENRIETTE.”

Andrée showed all her friends this note, and all, with the exception of Edith, advised her to accept his offer at once, on account of his position, wordly prospects, etc.

Edith advised : “ Andrée, don't accept him at once ; write and say that you wish to know him better before you consider marriage. Surely you want to fall in love with the man before you become his wife.”

“ Well, Edith,” replied Andrée, “ I want to marry, and so few Frenchmen will consider a girl without a *dot*. Think of his good position, Edith ; could you advise me to let this opportunity slip ? ”

Edith had no sympathy for Andrée's entirely wordly point of view. “ Then, Andrée,” she said, “ if you have decided to accept him, I would certainly not do so at once. You surely won't let him believe that you are so easily won. Let him woo you, and let his sentiment for you increase. Write and say you wish to know him better.”

Andrée followed Edith's advice, and, accordingly, the two couples had a drive in the Bois de Boulogne.

She was too heavily chaperoned to become intimately acquainted with her prospective fiancé.

In a few days came a note from Henriette :

" My dear little Andrée,

What is your opinion of M. de Verbizier ? He is very anxious to know. Count on me as an intermediary and *loco parentis*. Poor sweet little thing, you have no parents here.

M. de Verbizier wishes me to inform you that he is an atheist and cannot have a church wedding. Would you mind having only a civil one ? Knowing you to be a mediocre Catholic, I didn't know how you would feel about it.

Your always affectionate,

HENRIETTE."

This letter was a blow to Andrée, because, although the Mass was not a daily habit of hers, still she always dreamed of waltzing up the church aisle in a wedding gown, a wreath of orange blossoms and a white veil.

She discussed this decided drawback with her friends for a long time. She wrote to her parents for their opinion. It seemed to be a question as to whether she should marry him and forego the brilliant church wedding, or perhaps lose her only chance to obtain a wedding ring. She was also a little dubious about his looks. She asked Germaine, the vamp, for an honest opinion of his appearance.

" I won't commit myself, because you would never know if I or any of your friends spoke the truth. We can't be frank when we know what you would like us to say. I will mention that he stared terribly hard at me, with those protruding eyes of his, when he was ushered into the reception-room. I also noticed his dark eyebrows and pointed beard."



This was rather unsatisfactory to Andrée. She wrote Henriette that it was hard for her to think of foregoing a church service, but that if she liked M. de Verbizier extremely well personally after a few more interviews she might accept his proposal.

Edith said : " Andrée, invite him to call and be alone with him, get his ideas and views about life and everything. Conversation is too formal and stilted when chaperones are by."

" No, Edith," said Andrée, " I can't see him alone. Henriette would say that is impossible and not *distinge*."

The following letter, however, brought matters to a focus :

" Dear Andrée,

Please decide. M. de Verbizier is becoming very impatient. He says that you have seen him twice and you have had ample time to know him. He asks me to tell you that he has too strong a conscience to play the hypocrite at an altar. If you want him you will have to have only a civil marriage. He adds that he is too busy to call, and my husband and I are too occupied to chaperone you again. Write at once.

HENRIETTE."

Andrée stopped arguing and considering like a much-sought-after young belle, and accepted M. de Verbizier's offer. After she was entirely affianced to the *petit ingénieur*, Andrée thus idealised her recent past to Edith:

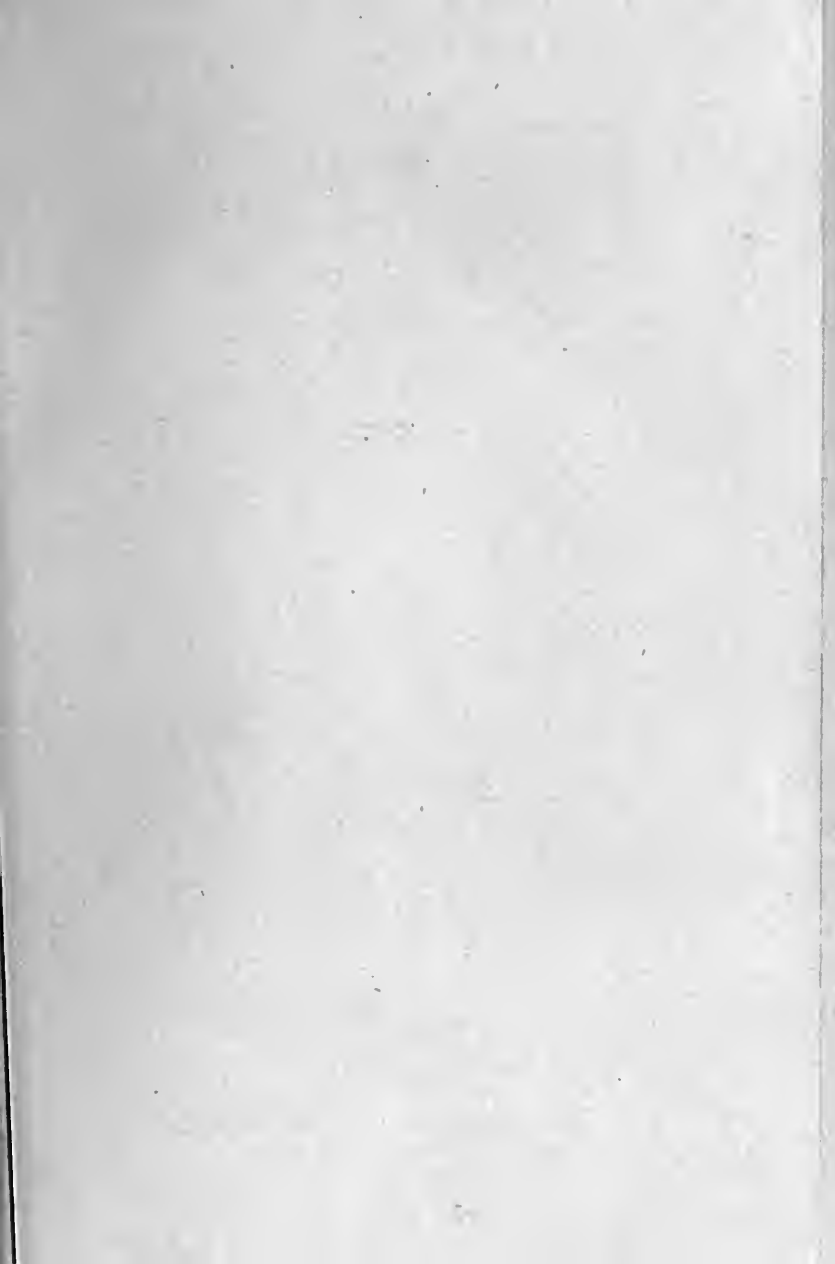
" Gaston and I were jolly friends. He would have been sentimental, but I wanted only good ballroom fellowship."

" To such lengths will vanity go," thought Edith, " to shy the truth entirely—even to one who knows—you delicious

rascal. You wanted to marry Gaston, and your fluttering little heart was also touched. You accept the *petit ingénieur* because you want to be the mistress of a good French home—no easy matter *sans dot*."

That summer Andrée resigned as teacher, and went home to her parents in her native Pyrennees village. M. de Verbizer visited them for a week, presented Andrée with a diamond ring, making her very happy and proud. In the fall they were married, and now live in Paris, a conventional French couple.

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COLONEL COULEJOU

## For His Children's Sake

COLONEL Coulejou was seated on a bench in the parklet at the rear of the Hotel de Ville between his two sons, thoroughly enjoying his cigarette and the entrancing panorama.

He was well past middle age, a retired Colonel, a widower, and the father of four children of whom he was inordinately fond.

The elder boy interrupted his dreams with a disturbing but quite a natural topic.

"Father," said his Roger, "I would like to go to Paris, to study at the Sarbonne to prepare myself to be a great professor. You would like that, eh?"

"Not for me," chimed in Marcel, "I want to go to England to learn the language. Professor Reviere says a year in England would set me talking English like a Britisher. And then I would want a position with a French business firm. And I think I might some day be rich—very rich. You would like to see your Marcel a millionaire, eh, Dad? Come, Dad, send me to England."

"My boys, you wouldn't leave your old Father, and this beautiful Aveyron. Not while you are so young."

"I am fifteen," said Roger, "and next June the Lycée will give me my *baccalauriate*."

"And I am already thirteen," added Marcel, "and Monsieur Reveire says I should not wait too long if I would get rid of my French accent."

"My dear, dear boys, how can your thoughts fly away from our beloved Rodez, where you were born, where we lost your blessed mother?" said the Colonel, and tears stood in his eyes.

Then he felt a pair of small arms about his neck and a kiss upon his cheek. He recognised the touch of his Henriette, and by the tightness of the hug, and the warmth of the kiss he knew that she had sought him out for a very special reason.

"My dear little Papa," she commenced, still holding him tight, "my dear little sweet Papa, Madame Gerard, the wife of our new Prefect, has asked me to sing at the next fête at the prefecture, and I must have a new silk gown, all gold in colour, and a bright green sash for this great event. Quick, Papa, say yes, my *petit mignon*. Hurry up my dear little Papa and make your little Henriette very happy."

"Dear little Henriette, where is the gown I brought you from Toulouse last Christmas?"

"Oh, Papa, I sang in it at the harvest festival. I wore it at the College play. Everyone in Rodez has seen it over and over again. And besides that, dear Daddie, my dancing lessons commence next autumn. I must have something white, and something new to show off before the other girls. You would not like to hear them say, 'Her papa is too poor to buy her clothes.'"

"Dear child, your old dad is poor enough, and you shouldn't want to show off."

Then came in Marcel, in a more serious tone, "Father, can't you find some nice work to help us children? I tell you we are coming on."

"It wouldn't be quite dignified for a retired army Colonel to go about begging a job. But run home, children. I am

going for a long walk, and I must be alone to think about my *petites*."

Rodez, the capital city of the department of Aveyron, in the Midi of France, sits upon a hill and commands from every point the most glorious prospects of hills and mountains in the distance. The city itself is as picturesque in its own way as the surrounding country. No place in France furnishes a more graphic picture of the Middle Ages. Bits of the old wall are still standing. One of its stout towers forms a part of the structure of the *Cheval Noir* hostelry. Another fragment serves as a segment of the high wall which surrounds the garden of the Mediaeval Palace of the Bishop.

For the greater part, however, the wall has given place to a wide and beautiful boulevard, following the crest of the hill. This boulevard at intervals widens into parklets, affording unobstructed views of the surrounding country. It was in one of these little parks that we found Colonel Coulejou and his two boys.

In the course of his walk he watched the peasants cutting the golden grain with their primitive sickles. He thought to himself, "Well, Dennis Puech, perhaps now the greatest living sculptor, was one of these, and his ancestors before him; and also Viala, the wonderful landscape painter; and also Vabin, the peasant poet, whose father could not read, and whose grandfather was a serf. And we are proud of these sons of Aveyron. My children too have a right to their ambitions—to the wish to rise. Ah, my children, my dear children, but how? Your father's pension is sufficient for our simple needs in Rodez, but how to send Roger to Paris, Marcel to England, to say nothing of Henriette's little nonsenses, and Marguerite's extrava-

gances still in the bud."

He was too deep in troubled thought to note the golden glow cast by the setting sun upon meadows and hills, and making the windows of Rodez on the hill in the distance blaze as with fire.

His children's hopes had given him much to think about.

It was dusk when he returned to the Place de la Cathédrale—where something caused him to stop before the church steps to note a descending female figure. On closer view he discerned the tall, angular, figure of the enormously rich Mademoiselle Gatez. Something still retained him and caused him to make an unwontedly deep bow, which led to the conversation which follows :

*Lova* "My dear Mademoiselle Gatez, always good, and always ~~proud~~. I see you every Sunday at high mass, and my children say they pass you each morning on their way to school ascending the cathedral steps."

"Yes, my Colonel. It is my life, and I have especially enjoyed the vesper service this evening. And your little dears, how are they?"

"Always well, always full of mischief. I wish you would talk to my Henriette and persuade her to take her little sins to the confessional. She needs it, and it will soon be time for her first Communion."

"Oh, but she will look sweet with her pretty face and brown curls as a little bride of our Lord, in her white dress and veil and wreath! Do bring her to me when she is all dressed up."

"Will be very happy indeed. And—and—perhaps you will permit me to call at other times—alone."

This double barrelled sentence brought a "*charmant*," and a nod, and an *au revoir*, my Colonel.



The French of the Midi are notoriously thrifty—both individually and collectively. And the Rodez municipality, as to its public lighting department, interprets “day-light saving” to include twilight and dusk as well.

The above interview commenced in the dim dusk and it would have ended in darkness had not the large electric bulb over the great cathedral door suddenly shed a mellow and revealing light. Hence the finale was not lost upon two of the Colonel's old comrades, still in the service. Major—— and Captain——.

“Did you see that bow?” remarked the major.

“To the rich Gatez. Oh, yes. But what of it? Dear old Coulejou, his politeness always ran to exaggeration. It always seemed to me that he really and truly loved everybody; but adored only his wife and children. Poor old Coulejou, how he worshipped his wife! And what a slave he is to his children. There was nothing in that deep bow except the usual spirit of our old comrade—absolutely nothing!”

The Colonel stood some minutes watching the retreating figure—and his thoughts were something like this:

“Was it a kind providence that led me at this time to the steps of the Holy Temple—to find an angel of deliverance descending? She is good, at least she is pious, and benevolent. She is rich. She is without any near of kin, and quite alone in the world. Roger might find his way to Paris, and sometime become a great professor, an honour to Aveyron. Marcel might indeed become master of English, and sometime the first rich man Rodez has ever produced. And my sweet little girls.....”

The two old warriors noted his deeply reflective face as he turned homeward—both of them silent, but wondering.

Not only the two old comrades but all Rodez watched the march of events with keen interest. They saw, and most of them with wonder, that the Citadel had not been taken by sudden assault, and that the siege might be long. But they counted on a dogged persistence on the part of the old veteran. And, since he was generally beloved in the community, most observers heartily wished him success.

The good bishop and his local clergy were also keen observers of the march of events. Quite naturally the feeling in this quarter was different from the rest. The spiritual chief of the department had long regarded this rich spinster, now along in years, as a legitimate appendage of his diocese. He had also noted her age, temporal affluence, and the lack of near of kin. Between the family interest of a retired colonel on pension, however worthy in its way, and the interests of the indigent orphans and aged of Aveyron his position could not be doubted. Both his holy office and his highly benevolent nature aligned him against the colonel.

Did he exercise influence obstructive to the colonel's suit?

Yes, certainly, but in an entirely proper manner, using no unseemly methods.

He did not go to her; she came to him, for his counsel about this matter as she had long been accustomed to do about all serious matters. Of course, and quite naturally, the good bishop pointed her to the higher calling of a life consecrated to the relief of the miserably poor, and unfortunate.

She was accustomed to follow his advice. Would she in this matter?

The major and the captain discussed this point over their

coffee, and they agreed that she would not.

He had been a good officer in his country's service as no one would deny. His vest was well decorated with medals, most of them heroically won. He was tenderly loved by many, and held in the highest esteem by all. He had moved along his very respectable way meeting all his obligations as best he could. His character and integrity were beyond reproach. But hitherto he had been accustomed to simple and little complicated situations, and to deal with them in a plain blunt way. He would not have understood the meaning of the expression "ulterior motives," for such motives were foreign to his nature.

The present campaign presented an aspect which troubled his ethical sense. The pursuit of the matrimonial road to worldly ends did not trouble him at all *per se*. This was not out of harmony with the accepted canons. Indeed wise foresight for family welfare is considered as among the highest virtues, not only in Rodez but in all France.

The question which did sorely trouble the Colonel was whether it was quite right to keep the family interest entirely absent from the wooing—whether it was entirely fair to leave it entirely to inference. His words of wooing were entirely stereotyped platitudes, and all his attentions were of the most conventional sort.

The manner of Mademoiselle Gatez invited nothing else. He had waited in vain for a show of interest in his children.

So in a muddled state of mind, unable to grip and solve the troubling question which pursued him, and with a conscience not quite right with the world, the Colonel just drifted towards the altar.

The colonel won this battle—as he thought—as the neighbours thought. But—he won—that is he won the

hand of Mademoiselle Gatez. But had he won that which he had sought ?

The Colonel showed the same sense of duty to his marital tie that he had always shown as an army officer, never failing in the little attentions which add so much charm to a real French gentleman. And this not at any cost to his wonted tenderness towards his children. Indeed in this delicate and difficult situation his love for his children had grown fonder.

The neighbours noted and admired much his masterful adaptation to the marriage of convenience. The major once remarked, "Coulejou outdoes himself. My God, one might think him truly in love."

"For his children's sake," was the captain's response.

"Perhaps, perhaps, but the old chap was never far sighted. He never could have been a general. He hadn't the least notion of strategy. Besides he was a tough nut. He always seemed rather fond of hardships. He certainly never would have married for his own comfort."

"It is clear, perfectly clear. Sentiment ! Rubbish ! It is for his children's sake," came the laconic response.

The children found their stepmother rather difficult. They had been in the habit of nagging their father for anything they wanted. He rarely had the means to gratify them, but he was always gentle with them. Somehow they couldn't get near to their stepmother. She was tall, straight and swished her black silk dress as she walked through her mansion. She continued her pious observances, but showed not the least sign of maternal feeling.

The following dialogue was not unnatural : "I wonder if she doesn't wear a wig. She is certainly old enough to have grey hair by now. Father's hair is white," said Roger.

"It would be oceans of fun to find out," said Henriette. "I would love to put on her wig, and dress up in one of her black dresses."

"So would I," said Marguerite, "but she always wears it."

"She doesn't wear it when she is asleep," suggested Marcel.

"But she always locks her door."

"I know," said Henriette, "and she keeps something before her keyhole, and her window blinds are always closed."

"Hurrah! I have it," said Roger. "We shall know if the *belle mere* wears a wig. I will not tell you how. Wait! You will see!"

The Colonel meant well and did his best, and a look in at the right time at a certain dinner party in the new home would have indicated that affairs were marching very well. The Vicar of the Cathedral and one or two others of the bishop's party were present, also an army comrade of the Colonel's in a bright uniform, and others of one side of the house and the other.

It was a Rodez dinner, and everyone who knows Rodez, knows that its equal could not be found outside the walls. One is absolutely sure of a good dinner in Rodez whether in a private home or in a public inn. A dinner in a private home is no better than one in even an humble inn—as to the eatables. But as to the drinkables—it is another story. The order is always about the same—a glass of sherry in the drawing room, and at table—the red *vin ordinaire*,—from the host's own vineyard, champagne, the cobwebbed bottle with the mark of 1840, or thereabouts, brought up from the cellar by the host himself—and the liqueurs conveniently interspersed—the coffee in the drawing room.

Under all the polite importunities it is not entirely easy to keep sober. Perhaps only the French quite accomplish it. Perhaps nothing is so apt to make all hearts kind, or to bring divergent social elements into harmony as a typical Rodez social dinner.

This particular dinner was marching towards a complete success. Representatives of Church and State and army were in a really fraternal mood. The usually rigid spinster lines in Madame Coulejou's face were softened. Her eyes had become even tender. The Colonel was at his amiable best. All went beautifully until—Was it providence that favoured the good bishop?—Something awful happened.

Madame Coulejou's coiffure lifted a bit, and before her hand could stop it, it rose to the height of the chandelier. And the poor madame sat in the midst of her guests, quite bald.

Roger had turned his little trick—not bad as practical jokes go—a fish line trained from overhead to the chandelier with a large weighted hook at the end, which would rise or fall at the will of Roger with the other end in hand, as he sat concealed behind an arras.

Imagine if you can the emotions of the Colonel, who had often shown great bravery under deadly fire. But you cannot. It would be equally vain to attempt to describe what immediately followed.

For the purpose of our story it need only be noted that the only face that did not show the deepest distress was that of the Cathedral vicar.

Following this episode the children were, and very properly, excluded from the family table and all the social side of the house. The children's quarters were clearly defined, and there was no over-stepping the bounds. The step-

mother was careful not to see them at all, and careful also that their names should not be mentioned between her and her husband.

The Colonel was a just man, and he could not question the entire justice of this arrangement, however much he might hope that she would be merciful and forgiving.

Following this episode also—possibly because of it—Madame Coulejou became a victim of heart attacks, and was finally confined to her bed.

During this period the Colonel's devotion never failed. His wife's comfort seemed always uppermost in his thoughts. There were doctors and nurses of course, but the good husband's gentle spirit seemed always to pervade the sick room, in the most tender ministrations, superb tact, the fresh-cut flowers by her bedside. Even his rivals, the clergy, who made daily calls, were treated with the gentlest consideration.

It would seem impossible that the invalid would not be deeply touched by all this tender solicitude.

"How now? What do you make of old Coulejou now?" asked the major of the captain one day as they were leaving the house.

The other answered with more softness in his tones than usual. "Coulejou is a good man. We know well that under no circumstances could he be anything else. But do not let sentiment cloud your judgment. He is first and last a father. It is for his children's sake."

The interest in the will was universal in Rodez, and news of the usual reading by the notary before the assembled family in deep mourning was awaited with bated breath. It came in due course. The last will and testament was comprised in a single sentence—

"I, Rosette Gatez Coulejou, being of sound mind and

*memory* do give and bequeath all my earthly possessions of whatever kind or nature to the Bishop of Rodez for the benefit of the poor of his diocese."

When Colonel Coulejou next appeared in public, which was after he and the children were again established in a very modest flat, the community noticed that he had aged considerably and that his bent figure moved with a heavy tread.

The bishop and the vicar noted that he did not see them when they passed him on the street.

The gossip ran the city that he now neglected every religious observance.

Some whispered that he was tending towards the *pense libre*.

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## The End of the Earth

THE sea was calm in the moonlight. A young girl watched the waters from the rocks. There was not a zephyr blowing to break a ripple. There were no gaudy colours to disturb the harmony. The grey shadows in the crevices of the white rocks, and the blue sky, all tended to increase the calm of the picture.

"Where could I find more peace in the universe than here on the shores of Brittany, in Finistère, which means the end of the earth, the old monks called this tongue of land that for they thought it was the end of the earth," thought the girl from the noisy city, as she looked at this scene of quiet beauty.

She slowly retraced her steps to the quaint little village of Conquet. Passing through quiet, narrow streets of grey stone houses she suddenly came upon a huge crowd of men and women huddled together on one side of the street. She noticed little white bonnets, large dark aprons, full skirts and black scarves of the women and the black broad-rimmed hats with dangling ribbons; short, black velvet jackets and plain black trousers of the men. Both men and women were endeavouring not to make any noise with their wooden shoes. They were eagerly watching a well-dressed man pace up and down the middle of a cobblestone street. His hair was dishevelled. His knitted brow and expression showed rage.

He was alternately swearing to himself, and yelling to a woman in the second storey of a large substantial house.

"Come down at once, clear out of my house, you unfaithful wife, you miserable wench. You and my brother have played me false, and I shall throw you both into the streets to-night."

"I can't come, yet," shouted a shrill voice, "I have to pack my clothes in my box first."

"Hurry up, you have had time enough to pack and repack already. How much longer have I to pace the streets?"

"Well, you don't need to be out in the cold. You may come inside if you like." Thus she answered, leaning out of the window, and displaying a comely face with rosy cheeks to the crowd who made up an attentive audience to the little drama in real life.

"Come inside! I wouldn't dream of setting my foot inside as long as you two vile people are there."

"Please don't turn us out," pleaded the woman, "we have no place to go. Where will we find shelter for the night? Have pity on us, Marcel."

"Out with you, you deserve no pity; nothing will give me more joy than to see you leave my house destitute, and without a roof to cover your heads. Every honest soul in Conquet will shut his door to you. My brother has enjoyed the hospitality he has betrayed long enough. *Mon Dieu! Mon Dieu!*"

He continued to walk up and down the street cursing like a wild animal, roaring with rage.

"What is all this about?" asked the young girl, both shocked and surprised by the scene.

"He is suffering a great humiliation," confided one of the simple women.

"We do not pity him because he has always considered himself above us in station, and has walked with his head in the air, so proud to be a magistrate. Now shame has brought him from his pinnacle; now he must suffer the scorn of the people he once snubbed."

The woman again turned to the scene of wrath and disgrace, keen and eager for every morsel of the scandal.

They were all anxious to see the disgraced pair leave the house.

The girl had no taste for discord, which disturbed her memory of the placid seascape. She returned to look for peace once more, but she felt wild winds blowing through her long hair and against her skirt. She beheld the erstwhile placid sea a tempest of angry waves beating against the rocks. The moon had disappeared under black storm clouds. Its white sparkling lights on the rocks were gone. The cliffs looked dark and sinister.

The girl sighed and thought, "storms and fury visit all nature, even human nature, and never will I find perpetual peace, not even here at the end of the Earth."

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CARMEN

## Misunderstood

"I'M a poor Andalusian, and I won't be able to afford a fire, but the fire in your eyes which are black burning coals, will warm us both," sang Senor de Soto, a Spanish cavalier to Carmen, his *novia*, who looked at him through the bars of her window. Her black, straight, silky hair was done up in a knot with a high tortoise-shell comb. A deep red carnation, the favourite flower of Seville, was pinned in her hair at the side, and she wore a black silk scarf with brilliant-coloured embroidered flowers. Her lips were painted a deep red. She was not a pretty young girl, but a handsome, mature woman.

De Soto found many words to describe her beauty, and she shewed her pearly white teeth in gratitude. Her beauty and love were his chief topics for every evening. He courted her year in, year out, and she patiently waited for the time when he would be making enough money as an engineer to marry her.

During the day, Carmen sat and rocked in the *patio* of her father's mansion. The sunlight played about her among the palms, casting many tiny shadows. Carmen didn't care about reading, she just liked to fan herself and dream about her lover, and would take delight in anticipating his call at her window in the evening. Sometimes, accompanied by her mother and aunt, she would take a walk in the park,

and feed the white pigeons. There were many roses blooming, vine-covered arbours, little ponds and all kinds of trees. Carmen loved the beauty of nature, and the scent of the orange blossom. Like her mother and aunt, she wore a black lace mantilla over a tortoise-shell comb; and they sometimes drank rich chocolate at tables in the park.

Carmen never walked out in the streets, either during the day or in the evening, except she was accompanied by at least one older woman. This was a matter of course. She was not shocked, however, if strange men in the street called her beautiful. It rather pleased her to be reminded of her beauty, in spite of her having no interest in them personally. All her devotion and love were for de Soto.

De Soto, apart from his working hours, spent much time at his club, and also in cafés, where men assembled for coffee and for sociability. De Soto's club was on one of the main streets which was used exclusively by pedestrians and donkeys, no carts or autos being allowed. Besides the numerous fashionable clubs, fascinating shops and cafés lined this street. One of the cafés was notable as a rendezvous for the picadors and toreadors.

One day de Soto sat talking in his club with some old friends. He was handsome, sensitive and high-minded, and was shocked at the following remark of one of the group :

" My word, de Soto, you're a lucky fellow to have a rich heiress for a *novia*. You'll be a wealthy man when you marry her."

" I assure you, Migolito, I never think of her wealth. I only long to possess her charming self."

" Try to fool us if you wish, de Soto, but I don't believe that her riches ever vanish from your mind. An engineer, you know, is generally a calculating man."



" Yes, I am a calculating man, I admit," retorted de Soto, and that is why I didn't rush into wedlock long ago without any means to support her. I believe that I will, in a few years, be able to make her my wife."

De Soto then left his friends ; but he felt that, although Consoli and Whaking had been silent, they also were thinking that his motives regarding Carmen were mercenary ; hence his feelings were terribly crushed. He was at a loss how to remedy the situation, for he desired the esteem of everyone. " What if I do marry Carmen," he soliloquized, " I wonder if she will ever suspect me of mercenary motives ? I could almost wish that her father would lose all his wealth, and then I could prove to my friends that I love her without the pesetas and superfluous trimmings."

But her father would not lose his wealth, he concluded. That was certain. And so what was he to do ? If only he were making lots and lots of money now—but alas ! he was not ; and it would be a long time before he was able to do so. The only solution which he could think of, was to give up all hope of marrying Carmen.

The idea of taking so vital a step in his life caused him much uneasiness. His mind was in such turmoil that he felt that he could not wait a few days for reflection. He must end everything that night.

" Carmen, I love you dearly," he told her when he met her that same evening, " I have never loved you so much as I do to-night, but my prospects for marriage seem hopeless. You are too beautiful to go on waiting for me who will never earn enough to marry you," he pleaded.

" I don't believe you at all, de Soto. You have kept me waiting already until I am no longer a young girl with soft fresh skin. I believe that you have fallen in love with some

silly little wretch with a pretty dimpled face."

As she spoke she drew her deep crimson scarf close around her bare chest, covering her necklace of rubies.

"No, no, I haven't," cried de Soto, "I have no image in my heart save yours. I never dreamed of your suspecting me of caring for another. Haven't I been your loyal lover? Haven't I always come here every evening when the stars were out in the black sky. Even when it rained, I came for a little while to feast my eyes on your beautiful face."

De Soto was doubly wounded that day. First by the suspicions of his friends, and afterwards by the suspicions of his *novia*.

No one seemed to hold him or his motives in high regard. He looked at Carmen with a wretched dejected face.

"Oh! why put on that false mournful face? You can't deceive me. I would respect you if you told me the truth about this young thing you now love, even though I would feel like killing you for your disloyalty to me."

Carmen's cheeks burned, and all the Spanish anger which comes to jealous women, came surging through her. When she saw him open his mouth to plead some more, she closed the window and fled.

De Soto never saw her again, for she and her parents moved to their chateau in Saint Sebastian by the sea.

De Soto decided that he would never marry. He longed to be able to prove to Carmen that he had no other lady in his mind when he broke with her. By and by he realised that he would never be able to prove anything, because he told himself: "She has closed her window to me. She has even left Seville and burnt her bridges behind her."

The years passed. De Soto lived a quiet life, always refusing his friends' invitations to join them at the *Kursaal*.

where the *bellerenas* flitted about with their castanettes and red and yellow ribbons. His friends tried to tempt him by describing their various illicit love affairs with these alluring beautiful dancers. He never went to the theatre, but worked hard, and, at last, realised success and a comfortable fortune.

He advised Rafael, his most intimate friend, never to marry. He closed his heart to love, and refused to be susceptible to the dashing handsome women he saw in the streets with their chaperones. They boldly looked at him and seemed to demand admiration. Indeed such was their custom with most men; and in this they were privileged above the pretty American women, who, being without chaperones, could only return a frown for a stare.

One day, while visiting some relatives in Albereda, a picturesque town near Seville, a mother and daughter came to call. They both wore black lace mantillas. The daughter, Pilar, had a pale white face with beautiful regular features. Her hair was brown and her eyes were green—a rare possession in Spain—and, therefore, highly prized. Her disposition was shy but very sweet.

De Soto told his relatives some days later: "Senorita Pilar is very beautiful, but naturally she is too young to think of a middle-aged man like me."

"You don't need to tell us that you think her delightful, for we detected admiration in your eyes when she was here. Why, you gazed at her all the time as though you were in a trance. We asked her the other day what she thought of you, and she said she liked you very much. I think that she would favour your suit."

"I really don't believe you, my cousin, but you do encourage me a little, and I will make a bold attempt to win her."

When Pilar and her mother next came to tea, de Soto sat beside her and talked to her about music, and he learned that she was taking lessons in the piano.

"I will stand beneath your balcony Friday evening in the hope of hearing your sweet music," he boldly ventured.

Pilar blushed and revealed herself to be extremely shy. She tiptoed to her mother and suggested that they should leave as it was quite late. De Soto observed her coyness, but thought that it only added to her charms.

Friday evening came and de Soto "played the bear," as the Spanish call it, by walking backwards and forwards under Pilar's balcony. After two hours she rewarded him with sweet notes from her dainty fingers pressed on the keys of her piano. He listened intently and was made very happy. She played pretty Spanish tunes, and Flamenco music. He longed to see her face, and to hear her musical voice; but those were favours he could not receive at present.

He came evening after evening and listened to her playing. Though he could not see her she could, and did, see him by peeping through a latticed window. She was flattered and delighted to see him standing in the street, but she was too shy to let him see her.

She was timid when she thought of the future. She had always been afraid of men and of their staring at her. But the fact that she was hard to win made her all the more desirable in de Soto's eyes. Everyone knows that men are hunters and desire rare women, and rare birds.

One evening, however, she did appear on the balcony, wearing a bunch of violets in her hair. She carried a yellow rose in her hand and tossed it down to de Soto. Her orange-coloured silk scarf was a little gaudy for such a

modest girl, but she was desirous of making a striking spectacle. She was eager to reward him for his ceaseless attentions night after night, and his tireless "playing the bear."

De Soto stood in awed silence and drank in the beauty of her vision. The bright moonlight lit up her pale face, and the yellow light of the street lamp revealed the gorgeous colour of her orange scarf. The balcony was too high for quiet conversation. He called to her, however, but she put her finger on her mouth to enjoin silence. She had a soft voice, and was unwilling to strain it so that he could hear. She was also timid, and afraid that a chance pedestrian in the quiet street might hear.

"Please, please," he called, "please, senorita, make it possible for me to speak to you; I have something very important to say."

Pilar shrugged her shapely shoulders. She couldn't hear all he had said; but she knew very well that he had wanted passionately to tell her something. She smiled and then vanished. All was dark on the balcony, and de Soto felt that his world was very gloomy and suddenly bereft of the most charming fairy from fairy-land. The light in his soul had gone out for a few moments; but a little later he recovered his spirits and went away humming one of the Andalusian tunes which Pilar had played. There was something fascinating, weird and sad about the Andalusian music. "After all," he thought, "she has granted me more to-night than ever before, so why should I be impatient for all her favours at once?"

Pilar's father was a lawyer who had died leaving his wife and daughter very little money. They had just enough to live simply in a small flat on the third story. They couldn't

afford a large house with a *patio* and handsome iron gates, and Moorish mosaic decorations like those in the home of Carmen. They had sufficient means to buy food, clothes and to pay for Pilar's piano lessons. They couldn't afford to travel to balmy Malaga during the short, cold, rainy season of Albereda and Seville. Nor could they go to Saint Sebastian for the sea breezes when the golden colored houses of Albereda baked under the Spanish sun. But they were content with life, and enjoyed wandering about the ruins of the yellow castle which many artists loved to paint. They often walked along the river by the old mill, and through the beautiful orange-groves, the foliage covered with pink, white and rose-colored blossoms.

They had their circle of friends who went about visiting each other in the afternoons. One of these friends was a neighbour who occupied an apartment on the ground floor of Pilar's house; and it was on this friend that Pilar made a point of calling one day with a definite, cunning purpose in her mind. She was so much in love with de Soto now that she boldly requested her friend, Lutia, to allow her the use of her window for that same evening.

"Most certainly, my little one," answered Lutia, "my whole flat is yours." This is a custom among Spanish people to offer an acquaintance, or a friend, their house. Of course no one takes them literally.

That evening de Soto watched the dark balcony for hours, and became terribly worried lest he should have to go home disappointed. He felt that he had offended his gentle Pilar by indiscreetly calling to her on the previous evening. He listened in vain for her usual soft music.

Suddenly his eyes automatically dropped to the ground floor of the house, and he saw the beautiful face of a woman

in a window. He did not recognise the features, hence he wondered if another *senorita* was waiting for her *novia*. He nervously looked up and down the street to see if he could discern the shadow of a man. All was quiet as before. Then he heard a pretty laugh. He had stood in the middle of the street in order to obtain a good view of the balcony. But now he rushed to the window, and there, behind the usual protecting bars of Spanish houses, he discovered the face of his enamorata. He made use of his old list of compliments which he had once used to win the love of Carmen; but he poured forth many more which Pilar's spiritual beauty inspired. Hers was quite different from the dashing physical beauty of Carmen.

Pilar wore a white silk embroidered scarf which looked exquisite in the moonlight. One white carnation rested in her soft hair.

"Your eyes are like emeralds," said de Soto, "and they look right into my soul. I believe that you see the innermost secrets of my heart with your fascinating emerald eyes."

She blushed a girlish blush, and words failed her when he made her such compliments. Her reception of his praise was quite different from the proud tilt of the handsome head, the satisfied smile and the flashing teeth of Carmen. The ghost of his former love haunted him as he thus compared the difference in behaviour of these two women who had, in turn, captured his heart.

"I shouldn't be thinking of Carmen," he soliloquised. "I thought that I had crushed my sentiment for her long ago. Her memory has been dead for years, and now, at this moment, why do I think of her?"

"Don't look as if you were so far away," said Pilar. And

she gave him a sweet smile. He jumped as if wakened out of a dream. Carmen's ghost fled from his mind and all his thoughts embraced the lovely white vision before him. He felt as if he loved her and no one else, and that he would always love her. He said many things to that effect, and begged her to be his wife. He pleaded with her to let him touch her small white hand, but she drew it away and said : " We can talk together, but I will not let you kiss me until we are married."

" I know, I know," he cried, " and I respect you and all your wishes. You are like a pure dove. Your face is like an untouched lily. Your consent to be my wife is far more than I deserve, and I will serve you faithfully until I die." He then bowed reverently and went away.

De Soto's parents were dead, so they could not go through the formal proceedings of proposing marriage to her parents. He courted Pilar at the window of her generous neighbour for about a month. He earnestly desired to hasten the marriage. " Why should I wait," he thought, " I am no longer a young man, and I want as many years of happy married life as are left to me. Besides I am no longer a struggling engineer, but can amply afford to give my darling Pilar a home, with servants to work for her ; to buy small jewels and a little finery. Thank Saint Mary, I am no longer liable to be branded as a mercenary rogue marrying a wealthy heiress." And he expressed his heartfelt thankfulness that Pilar and her mother were known to have but small means.

De Soto felt serenely happy while walking with his wife's willing hand in his one day in the Alcassa gardens of Seville. It was a paradise of palm trees, small palms, roses, orange and fir trees, ponds with floating water-lilies and swimming



gold fish, and walks covered with cherry-blossoms. The devoted couple, she with her black mantilla framing her pale face, and he still a handsome man, seemed to be part of the paradise. Her emerald eyes, as he always called them, looked up into his dark orbs, and he was delighted to see his own intense love reflected therein. As he thus looked at her, he overheard a pedestrian whisper to another :

"See that man there. He kept a beautiful woman waiting to marry him until she was old and wrinkled, and then he brutally deserted her for that young pretty girl you see with him now."

"Oh, what a cruel man!" was the other bystander's remark ; and they both passed on after staring impudently at the bride and her husband.

De Soto recoiled on hearing the unjust accusation, and his face looked haggard and miserable. The blow had cruelly cut his sensitive nerves and fibres.

Pilar was quick to notice this, and patted his arm sympathetically. "Don't let outsiders make you wretched," she said, "I understand. I have heard all about your engagement of long ago, for gossip travels with winged feet. I know that your motives were sincere, though falsely misinterpreted. I know the cruel, thoughtless thrusts of those who should have been your friends. Unkind people often suspect as wicked the highest motives of noble men. Do not be hurt by those who do not love. Smile and look at me who do love you."

De Soto was dumbfounded, but he obeyed his wife's request, and looked at her and believed her truthful emerald eyes.



## An Andalusian

**R**ICCO Consoli loved the bull-fight as all true Spaniards do. He used to save the little paper packets of sugar which came with his coffee on his afternoon and evening visits to the café or his club. This thrift fetched him twelve little cubes of sugar per day, or 360 each month—or, etc. A season's saving was considerable. And thrift is, generally speaking, not a Spanish characteristic.

Don Ricco Consoli's thrift was not done in stealth, but boldly, perhaps a bit boastfully. The little packet was placed in his vest pocket as much as a matter of course as the sugar rations of his table comrades found their way into their coffee cups and their water glasses. He had disciplined himself to take his coffee without sugar, and self-discipline is not a Spanish characteristic either. (And yet Don Ricco Consoli was the most obviously Spanish Spaniard I have ever known). All winter long he accumulated white packages of sugar and sold them during Lent to a friend who was head of a large school in the country near Seville. After Easter and the *Semane Santa* when gaiety commenced, he used the sugar money to buy tickets for the bull-fights. He did not feel that he could afford to use his earnings from the bank in that kind of dissipation. He and his friends occasionally purchased a bull, hired a small arena, invited their acquaintances to watch them fight a bull without horses, until they had killed him.

He explained to foreigners: "A Spanish gentleman cannot be a professional picador in a public arena, but it is the game thing to fight in a private arena when one is young, slim and agile."

In the evenings he often went to the dancing academy with his men friends to watch the future bellerenas learn to make music with the castanets, and learn the steps and motions of the Andalusian dances to the fascinating *flamenco* tunes and clapping of hands. The youngest pupils could just walk and the oldest were about fourteen. Occasionally a star from the theatre came to show them the correct attitudes and the various expressions of anger, coquetry, love and triumph which play as important rôles as toes in Andalusian dances.

The dancing master was very strict, and frequently corrected them, and told them to put force into the stamping which was a feature of several of their dances. After this lesson was over came the practice in modern dancing. Ricco and his friends danced the waltz and two-steps with the little girls. It was a humorous sight to see the strapping big men dancing seriously with the miniature partners. It was a bit of recreation to the little maids who had put a deal of strenuous effort into the castanet dances.

Ricco loved everything Spanish and always conformed to his native customs. When he was returning from the dancing academy he noticed one dark figure after another standing before barred windows wooing black-haired, black-eyed maidens. He noted that most of them wore dark red carnations in their hair, high tortoiseshell combs with embroidered scarves around their shapely shoulders. He naively said to his friends: "I wish I had a *novia* to whom I could speak flowery words and make pretty com-

pliments every evening. *Wappo, bonita, bella grazieusa*, how many synonyms there are in our language to describe a woman's beauty ! ”

Ricco was a notorious book borrower. It was an avowed principle with him never to return a book that was lent to him. He took pride in his library of 3000 borrowed volumes, and had no pangs of conscience.

His father lived in Therese and made the famous cherry wine. His old mother, with her pure face framed in a black lace mantilla, often journeyed to Seville to visit him. When he was wicked in her eyes, she whipped him. “ My good mother takes a virtuous pleasure in punishing me for my wrongs,” he explained, “ I permit her to whip me to let her have the satisfaction of believing that I will be a better man in the future. And since she is very weak she cannot hurt me very badly.”

“ Let me hear your story ? ” he boldly asked me when I was sketching him at his request on the flat roof of a white stucco house.

“ Tell me yours ? ” I asked.

“ Oh ! mine is very sordid,” said Ricco. But I insisted on hearing it.

“ I love Pilar, a beautiful woman in my native town,” Ricco then related. “ I have often asked her to be my wife, but she is destined to be a sister of mercy. Unfortunately she is not subject to flattery, as most Spanish ladies are ; so I am forbidden to talk to her of her beauty, and cannot win her in the way many Spanish cavaliers court their *novias*. Pilar's joy lies in caring for the afflicted.”

“ Has she taken the veil ? ” I asked.

“ No,” replied Ricco, “ because at present she feels it to be her duty to care for her invalid mother, and when she is

no more needed to serve her mother, she will lay her services at the feet of the spiritual mother of us all."

"Pilar writes to me sometimes," he went on. "She tells me that she is unworthy of me, and that I should marry a woman far more lovely. But I can think of no other. Pilar is the one I love and admire, and if she becomes a nun I will become a monk. So you see my romance is very sordid."

"I hardly call it sordid," I commented.

"Have you made me handsome? please flatter me," begged Ricco. "Make me as good looking as you made that American law student, you know the sketch I mean, which I found in your collection. Don't scold, don't look so vexed. I could not help looking at your drawings. I had no power to restrain my curiosity and could not wait to ask your permission. Have you finished my portrait?"

"No, not yet, please don't speak because I am drawing your mouth."

"I must be going now," Ricco said, suddenly, "or I will be late for Mass."

"Can't you miss the service?" I asked while laughing.

"I must be off," said Ricco. "I believe your drawing is finished, let me see it—yes, I like it very much because you have flattered me, and I am going to frame it and hang it in my room beside the oil painting of myself. Now, I must go, really."

"But what if you miss Mass?" I teased.

"I would have to confess my sin to the priest, and he would make me say a great many prayers for being absent from church on Sunday."

With that he hurried off to the Cathedral.

I sat and considered Ricco's character. Until this morning

I thought him frivolous and gay, now I see that he is capable of an enduring love ; a strong religious faith, and a very human vanity.

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SEHUDO

## Art for Art's Sake

"WELL, you are almost like a Spanish girl, you are an hour late," said Migilito to an American girl who had come to pose for him in his studio.

"I am sorry, Migilito, I didn't mean to be late, but I couldn't find my way through all the little narrow streets of Seville. After wandering about for ages, I met a captain I know, and he helped me to find this old ducal palace, hidden away here. But how fascinating it is! Isn't that old medieval court with the marble well charming? I like these pillars supporting the arcade. Tell me all about this palace, Migilito."

The painter felt that, however fascinating to the girl the old palace might seem, she herself was so fascinating that he was unable to refuse her request.

"The duke, you see, died ages ago, without an heir; and so we painters came here and made the gorgeous rooms into our studios. But come upstairs. I have already been waiting too long for you."

Ascending a broad flight of stone stairs, and passing along a balcony, supported by beautiful marble pillars, they went into Migilito's studio. It was a long, narrow room. A little choir boy had been posing that morning, kneeling before a church lantern, but the picture was unfinished. There were several large paintings on the walls of ladies in white mantillas with carnations in their hair, and white scarves around their shoulders. One of the paintings represented a group of ladies looking towards the cathedral tower. The lace of the mantillas and the bright colored

embroidery on the white scarves were exquisitely executed.

One artist was in the process of reproducing a small garden scene on a huge canvas. He always painted small landscapes in the open, and later made beautiful reproductions on the large scale in the studio. A number of painters were sitting in the studio idling away their time.

Eleanor posed for Migilito and for one of his pupils. While the two men stood before their easels, painters from other studios in the palace sauntered in and out as if work and money meant nothing to them. They sat about on the antique chairs and stools ; they told jokes and laughed ; sang and whistled in the easy-going Andalusian way. Eleanor begged them to translate their jokes into French because she knew very little Spanish.

" No," said Felippi, an old painter ; and he put his finger to his mouth. " These jokes are not for innocent young girls' ears."

Eleanor wondered : " I can't imagine their jokes to be indecent. They look like a lot of innocent children wasting their time by joking and singing."

She was particularly struck by a very handsome painter who came in fine clothes and who flourished his cane about.

" Senorita," said Migilito, " would you like to see the other studios in this old palace ? "

" I would love to, if I may stop posing now ; and may I see your studio ? " she asked, addressing the handsome painter with the cane.

" Certainly, if you wish, Senorita. I am not in the habit of showing my studio to people, but for you I will open my door." he said, bowing with his hand over his heart.

He reminded Eleanor of the dancing master at the Academy where the girls learn to clang the castanettes. The

evening before, the dancing master had bowed to Eleanor and said ; " Generally I only instruct my pupils and never do exhibition dancing ; but since it is your wish, I shall dance."

Eleanor thought how gallant the Spaniards were by granting so readily all her wishes, and telling her to her face how beautiful she was. She thought of how the painters had coaxed her to pose for them because they declared that they had found her to be so extremely pretty. They quite embarrassed her so that she did not know what answer to make to their compliments. She wondered what the Spanish women did when they were praised, and whether they were pleased with the flattery they received. It might be that the Spaniards loved to give pleasure to the frail creatures of her sex.

" What are you dreaming about ? " asked Migilito, while watching Eleanor, who seemed lost in thought with her eyes looking into space.

She blushed and looked up. " I wouldn't take a penny for my thoughts," she answered. " But come, show me the studio."

Migilito took Eleanor first to a studio filled with dark, old masterpieces of Madonnas and Bible scenes. Eleanor was greatly disappointed, having expected to see fresh colorful modern pictures.

The owner of the studio seemed to read her thoughts, and explained, with regret, that he was so poor that he had been compelled to take up the work of restoring old and blemished masterpieces from churches and wealthy homes. " If only I did not need to eat," he sighed, " I would paint only landscapes." And with this remark, he threw open another door and led Eleanor into a small room where hung

many bright canvases of outdoor life.

As Eleanor gazed at a small seascape she imagined she felt on her face the blowing of sea breezes. When she looked on a small picture of a Spanish desert, she fancied she could feel the burning sun beating down on her head.

"Why don't you earn your living by selling these vivid reproductions of Nature?" she asked.

"Well, I do send every year some of my landscapes to the exhibitions at Madrid, but I don't succeed in selling enough to pay for all my expenses."

"I think the owners of those old dark masterpieces would be wise to hang your little gems on their walls, and put their blemished pictures in their attics. But, of course, they would say that I have no appreciation for the old school of artists; and I know that I haven't," concluded Eleanor, with emphasis.

From the restorer of old masters, they went to the studio of one of Spain's greatest artists. There were huge canvases representing girls working in the cigarette factory of Seville. All the pictures were of women.

"Do you never paint men?" asked Eleanor.

"No, never," answered the artist. "I am only interested in feminine beauty. I wish I could paint more pictures of the nude in the way I did when I was a student in Paris. Here our women have such a sense of modesty; they won't pose in the nude. I tell the dancing girls that they expose their limbs and shoulders to numerous coarse men, and that their actions on the stage are far more suggestive than if they were to pose nude for me all alone. But they won't see things that way. I will shew you one nude I painted long ago," he went on. "A young woman posed for it because she was in great financial distress. After she had

posed for several days, she left Seville, and for twenty years I have looked for a woman with a similar figure who will pose for my 'Diana at the Bath.' "

Eleanor looked at the unfinished picture of a lovely creature standing before a pool of water, and she was lost in wonderment.

Migilito broke in upon her reverie by suggesting that they should next visit the studio of the handsome painter with the cane.

As they walked along the porch, Migilito said : " The last painter you met is very famous and rich ; but no one knows of Sehudo's work outside of Seville."

" Sehudo bowed graciously to Eleanor and said : Now will you please excuse me because I never like to be present when anyone looks at my work. Perhaps I was foolish to let you come."

Eleanor was mystified, and wanted to beg him to stay, but before she was able to make her entreaty, Sehudo had left the room.

Eleanor's glance was immediately caught by a study of a laughing darkey, with beautiful white teeth and flashing eyes ; and whose brown skin was vividly enhanced by the white high lights which shewed the perspiration of the overheated creature, who was in the act of running—her face aglow with merriment.

" How vital and how superbly real she is," said Eleanor to herself.

" You bet I am real," the negress seemed to say in a laughing response.

Eleanor regarded the other few pictures in the room, and was delighted with the display of the various expressions and emotions in his men and women. They were all

wonderfully alive.

Eleanor became ruminative.

"To think that this young man is unknown outside of Seville," she remarked. "Spain ought to be proud to possess such a wonderful painter; he ought to be known to all the world. Oh! if the world could only see his paintings, he would be regarded as one of the greatest living artists." Her enthusiasm was unbounded. She admired his work far more than the lifeless women of the old masters.

So keen was the joy which she derived from the living creations of Sehudo that she went in the greatest excitement to the Hotel Angleterra and expressed her admiration to one of her friends who was a connoisseur of art, and to a correspondent to an American newspaper.

"Well," said her friend, "this is most interesting since I am a collector of pictures for museums in England. I might like to make a purchase."

"May I butt in," said an American millionaire, who was sitting at a table near by. "I heard you mention the great works of an artist. I should like to pick up some pictures while I am in Spain."

"In that case," replied Eleanor, "I will be delighted to take you to his studio. It would make him ever so happy to sell some of his paintings. If only some of them could find their way to different parts of the world, he would quickly become recognized, and his creations valued at their true worth."

"I know others in this hotel who are eager to buy really good pictures," said the millionaire, "I will tell them about this great painter."

"Oh, that would be lovely," said Eleanor, clapping her hands in unfeigned enthusiasm. "And, oh! I wish that he



could become famous! FAMOUS!!”

“I will go along to his studio and will ask him all the details about his life, and I’ll send an account of him to the American papers. Is he good-looking, Miss Cox?” asked Eleanor’s journalist friend.

“Oh, yes, Mr. Anderson. He is very handsome, with black hair and keen dark eyes.”

“Splendid! I will put his photograph in the front page of the newspapers, and directly all the Society ladies will be writing him to come to America to exhibit his pictures on Fifth Avenue.”

“Yes,” added the millionaire, laughingly, “and he will be entertained at teas and the ladies will make a lion of him.”

“Maybe some of his pictures will find their way to the Metropolitan Museum, or to the National Gallery, or the Wallace Collection, or to the Luxembourg Museum,” said Eleanor, as her fancy flew from land to land. She could already see Sehudo as an immortal painter, mounting to the stars.

The next day she conducted quite a number of interested people to see Sehudo’s paintings. Among these were three American millionaires, two art collectors, a professional art dealer from England, two French artists, and several fashionably-dressed ladies.

Sehudo was amazed when he found his studio invaded by so many people.

“I can’t understand,” he said helplessly to Eleanor.

She had expected to see an expression of pleasure, but, instead, she only saw worry and distress, written clearly on his face.

The people in her party thrilled over the pictures, and they thanked her for discovering this genius. The million-

aires immediately began to offer Sehudo enormous sums of money for his masterpieces, but, instead of delight, Sehudo revealed his displeasure; the thought of their offering money to him was repulsive. The newspaper man began to "pump" him with questions about his private affairs, and this conduct served only to offend him the more. He was dumbfounded, and looked as though he were the unhappiest man in the world.

"Please may I have a word with you alone, *Senorita*," he asked.

He took Eleanor to an adjoining room, which she immediately recognized as his workshop, his paints and palettes, brushes and other paraphernalia scattered everywhere.

"*Senorita*," he began, "why did you bring this mob of people here to disturb my quiet life?"

Eleanor was at first puzzled at his unexpected behaviour. She could only explain.

"I brought them," she said, "so that they would behold your beautiful works of art; that they might buy them for the public museums, and write about you, and make you famous all over the world."

"But, *Senorita*, I don't wish to dispose of my work. I love my pictures and wish always to keep them. I never send my pictures to the exhibitions of Madrid. I laugh at the foolish judgment of the judges there. I don't want fame; and to be known all over the world would give me no joy."

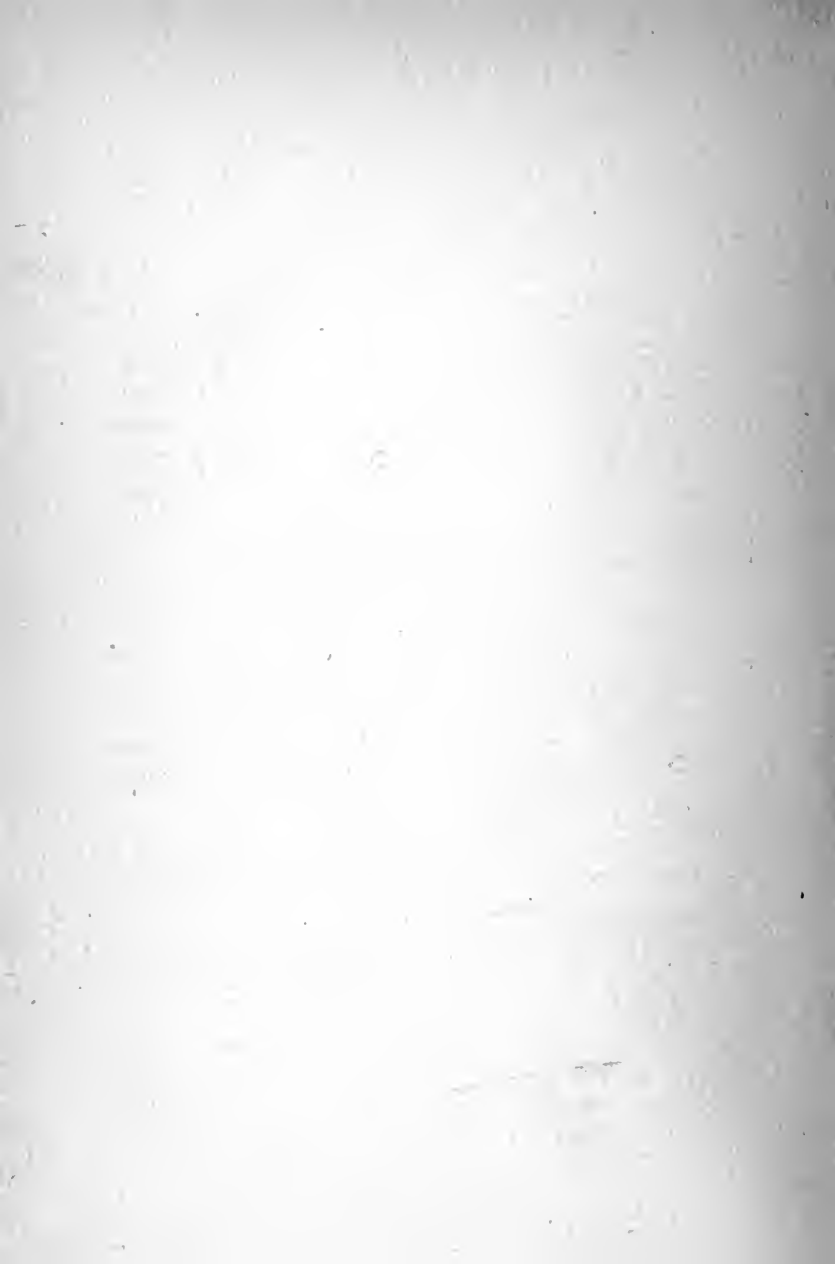
Thus spoke this wonderful artist who loved art for art's sake.

"Oh, but *Senor*, I derived the greatest joy in my life while looking at your paintings when I was all alone in your studio," pleaded Eleanor with great fervour.

"Just so," replied Sehudo. "You were happy alone with my pictures ; and so am I happy when I am alone with them, for they are my life-like reproductions of the people whom I know. They are my children ; the expression of my own life. So I would be sad—nay very miserable—if I had to part with them."

"Fortunately," he continued, "I have an independent income, and I do not need to prostitute my art for food and clothing. As for fame, I never had the remotest longing for it in all my life. With my art I am content. So please Senorita, send away all those coarse, talkative people. Ask them to leave me and my pictures in peace and happiness."

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## A Polygamist

**A**N old gypsy knocked stoutly on the arched door of a white Moorish house. It was one of those typical, flat topped houses in Tangier which have no number. The streets bear no names and one wanders through one narrow winding street after another, passing numerous white houses and mosques and occasional stalls with fascinating wares. The Gypsy didn't care which house she found as long as its occupants were affluent and profitable customers.

Zobeid, a handsome slave with skimpy yellow trousers, opened the iron door and shouted with glee.

Other slaves hastened to greet the fortune teller in the court. Thence the merry troupe ascended the stairs to the terrace of the patio and entered a long narrow chamber, lighted by stained glass windows. Two rows of Egyptian pillars supported the ceiling. The floor was covered with rich oriental rugs. Brilliant divans lined the walls.

Moorish women, showing every shade of colour of skin from dark brown to pure white and all degrees of physical comeliness, were reclining on cushions.

A little boy standing beside his mother was drinking perfume with evident relish. Two with prayer beads in hand were paying their devotions to Allah and his prophet ; one girl was sleeping ; another was singing.

True to the Mohamedan religion no images were in evidence, mirrors hanging on exquisite mosaic walls served instead of pictures.

A quiet content had pervaded the group until the arrival of the gypsy. Then all gathered around her with the liveliest animation. Each held out her hand and begged to have her fortune told. A black concubine made her small child give up a peseta, a gift from a foreigner. Of course the fortune teller had to be paid for her services.

The three white daughters wanted her to describe their respective future husbands. Zobeid was anxious to know if she would have a lover. (If she were to have one she would have to keep it a secret from her jealous master who exacted entire loyalty from his legal wives, concubines, and slaves). They had utter faith in every word the gypsy told them. Some she left depressed, and some mirthful.

Aboul Hassan Mangimani, the master of this harem, was a pasha and was one of the principal men of the Moorish government. He was enormously wealthy. He had three legal wives and a separate establishment for each.

The wife in this particular mansion was good natured and had European ideas about love and marriage. The master had already arranged for the marriage of Therrya, the eldest of his three daughters. Her mother had often talked to her about how she might hold her husband's love. One time she said :

" My child, I wish that I could arrange for you to see your future husband. No, I cannot even tell you when you will wed him, but I will confide one bit about him to you. I saw him through the key-hole when he came to ask your father for your hand. Perhaps I ought not to tell you about him."

" Please mother, tell me. You believe in romantic love, please tell me all about him. Is he attractive ? "

" Yes, sweet, I will tell you about him—yes, I will. Dearest, you will have a handsome man for a husband—a

very handsome man. Now, I have broken one of the rules of the Koran."

The conversation which followed consisted only in many repetitions and the elaborations of this luminous information.

Therrya kissed her mother and went away to sit alone by a stained glass window to think, and weave a romance about this strange, handsome man who was to wed her. The glass was quite opaque against the curious eyes of men. No man's eyes had yet spied her lovely straight nose and small red mouth. When she desired fresh air she sat on the flat roof with four high walls around it. Only the glaring sun and the greenish blue sky could gaze down on her graceful form, beautiful white face, and straight black hair.

She wondered, and wondered when she would be taken from her father's house.

Our heroine's days were so alike, one differed little from the other. Little wonder that she scarcely kept track of the days of the week. Thus run the days in the rich Arab home, not many events in the occidental sense, many idle dreams, romantic fancies, and shadowy presages of the real romances of the oriental quality, and almost a total lack of energetic effort.

She and her two sisters tried to learn to read and write Arabic, but they found it too strenuous, and turned to crocheting handkerchiefs for pastime.

One day a friend of theirs, who was partly Arabic with both European and Moorish ties, brought an American girl to visit them. The two guests took off their shoes and sat down on the divans with the women. Zobeid brought tea and cakes on a large silver tray with more fragile glasses than there were people present. There were several pretty coloured cups which remained unused.

Perhaps the unused glasses were for possible unexpected guests. Or perhaps the departed souls from the harem returned to sip the sugar sweetened and mint flavoured tea, and fancy that they were also nibbling the sweet cakes.

The slaves served the refreshments and yet they sat with the hostesses and the guests and joined in the laughter and conversation. It seemed quite a democratic arrangement and yet they never became aggressive nor overstepped their bounds.

The slaves danced to entertain the guests. It was a sort of shimmy accompanied by oriental singing.

The hostess begged Adelene Harper, the American girl, to come again and come often. She came again and brought a box of chocolates because her good Tangier friend had advised her that giving was the custom. The eldest daughter immediately presented Adelene with a pretty handkerchief, her own workmanship. She told her that she was going to marry a man, whom she had never seen. She asked Adelene if she was engaged and if so, did she know and love her future husband?

Therrya was greatly concerned about her own future and full of longing for the love and happiness of her dreams.

The three daughters became much attached to Adelene, and eventually broke their customs and danced for her. They were supposed only to dance before members of their own family and never before an outsider. Their slaves were ordered to dance to entertain their guests. The three daughters not only danced for Adelene, but danced with her. Their Arabic dances were generally suggestive of the romantic, always rythmical, frequently beautiful, usually innocent, but not always decent in the suggestions. One finds in



Morocco the origin of the beautiful and far famed Andalusian dances, where the dancers and the audience all join in the clapping of hands during the dance.

The daughters often urged Adelene to stay overnight with them. One day the mother sent Zobeid, one of the white, good looking slaves, with her to her brother's harem, which once belonged to her deceased father.

It was also a pretentious house. While Adelene was sipping tea with the members of the household a slave came from the shops with many varieties of brilliant coloured silk material. The women flocked around her to choose a piece of the silk. Each could fancy herself in a charming native dress in this or that colour. Hudji Ben Omar, the head of the harem, paid for several pieces.

He rested among pillows at the end of the room, with his women scattered around him.

The girls begged Adelene to dance for them. They knew that she had danced in their cousin's house and didn't see why she should not dance for them. In truth Adelene was embarrassed to dance before the master of the harem, but her ignorance of Arabic made excuses impossible. While dancing before the handsome master, with his black beard and flashing eyes, she felt like a slave dancing in the "Arabian Nights."

Another day the mistress of the harem which Adelene frequently visited, sent Zobeid out with her again. Adelene noticed how the pretty white slave cast many coy glances at Arabian soldiers, while they walked through streets which were scarcely wide enough for two to walk abreast.

After walking some distance she knocked at a large iron gate.

A black slave opened the gate and Adelene thought that

surely she was in a factory. She heard, "bang! bang! bang! drum! drum! drum!" which all made a tremendous racket, and yet there was system in the noise.

She mounted the stone stairs of the patio and through large open doors saw a row of women sitting on divans. They were beating drums and singing very loudly. Some were beating small drums over curious braziers of burning charcoal. They wore various long, bright yellow, violet, green and rose satin smocks covered with white lace. Some were in silk trousers, others wore skirts. Each wore her hair in a long strand down the back, braided with ribbons. Their heads were ornamented with fancy silk material. Some were bare-footed, and none wore either shoes or slippers.

Each wore her most precious jewellery on this occasion which was indeed a great occasion. It was one of a series of marriage ceremonies of Therrya. She was gloriously attired, but too curious about her near future, and too thrilled and frightened to be hearty and happy like the rest. They continued their curious music, and persuaded Adelene to pursue a whirling dance until tea was served. After the refreshments they went up to the roof, and then into a tower house with actual open windows. There they were able to look down upon the city of white houses, and to the sea of that rich Mediterranean blue. Adelene talked and laughed with her special friends, or rather they made signs and talked at each other and seemed to understand. Her new acquaintances asked her many questions. They were very curious about Adelene and her clothes which were of course utterly different from theirs.

The wife in this harem was the second wife of Pasha Manzimani, who was the father of Therrya. She was very

handsome, dark and plump. Indeed the wealthy Arabs were known to prize the fat women as precious and most desirable. She had young children, and numerous slaves to serve her.

Adelene followed the merry group down to the drawing room on the ground floor where she thought they were inspecting white cloth. But suddenly she saw the women dress themselves in these white things in some curious manner. Before she realised what was happening she could see nothing but dark eyes protruding from white. Suddenly the pairs of eyes and white phantoms were hovering around her in the dark street outside the great iron door. Each little group of ladies and slaves, all looking the same, seemed to be beckoning to Adelene to follow them. Each group seemed to be going in a different direction. Adelene could not recognise Therrya or any of her old friends, and felt frightened, and did not know where she was. She was afraid to accompany any of the women to their respective harems, so she ran aimlessly through the dark lonely maze of streets until she finally found her way into the main thoroughfare, where she at last felt relief. She was once more amidst a howling, talkative mob of Moorish men in long white robes and boys with heads half shaven, and occasional holy men in tatters and rags. Men in tatters in Tangiers seem to be always "holy men" or saints still in the body. She passed cafés with Arabs, some in their red fezes and others in white turbans, embroidered jackets, broad gaudy sashes and full short trousers, sitting on the floor drinking tea or coffee. She stopped at a stall and bought a fancy leather purse and a pair of green leather shoes with golden ornaments. Adelene couldn't withstand these tempting articles. Little boys with large baskets bothered her all

the way home, begging her to let them carry her parcels.

The next night she saw the bridegroom of her friend, Therrya, walking at the head of a procession on the way to a bath. The bath was part of the marriage ceremony. The bridegroom had several feasts with his friends.

The bride also took part in the ceremony of the bath, and in feasts with her women relatives and friends.

The following evening Adelene saw a white box, which resembled a huge beehive, on the back of a donkey. The box contained the bride, her friend, the poor bride who was supposed to weep during the entire journey.

The causes for tears were potent enough—the jog trot of the donkey, the narrowness of her prison—and the *terra incognita* at the end of the journey ; a strange house, which was to be her future home ; and a strange man—who was to be her husband.

She might have shed tears, crocodile, in deference to the marriage rite ; or real—none could know for certain—for her little prison completely concealed her from view.

The followers sang and chanted a weird oriental strain.

Adelene was fascinated by the strange scene and queer music, but she was very sad, because she feared that she would never see her friend again.

The bride was carried to her groom's house in Tangier. He bade his festive friends good night, and hastened to discover the face of his bride. He found her covered with veils in the entrance of the mansion. He knew that if her face displeased him he could divorce her, but he was in hopes of finding beauty. He didn't dream that he was to possess a strange bride who was even far more curious to see his face than he was to discover hers. But she stood there motion-

less and inert. She patiently waited while he lifted her numerous veils which were all woven about her in the most complicated fashion. At last he saw her and was delighted. She adored his pale, handsome face and reddish golden hair. He was a rare exception. The great majority of Arabs have straight or curly black hair, and dark skin showing the negro infusion into the blood.

He kissed her and took her in his arms as he had the right to do, even though it was the first time he had laid eyes on her. He was only doing what countless others of his Arabian ancestors had done. Probably many brides before had quailed, and hated being embraced by detestable, gross masters. They were to them masters indeed and not husbands in any true sense.

The following day they left his town house where she had only seen a few slaves, and went to his villa in the country. There was a high wall surrounding the estate so, to Therrya's delight, she was allowed to walk among the roses, lilies and countless other flowers. In her father's home she had only been able to commune with the sky, but now she could breathe the perfumes of the blossoms. At twilight her affectionate husband sat with her in a little rustic bench beside a miniature waterfall. It was novel for her to have a young man to tell her how beautiful she was. Sometimes he lectured her like a father, and told her that he was very old. He was in fact thirty, and she was twenty-one. Her mother with those "queer European ideas" of hers had kept her from wedlock until she had a beautiful blossom to give to some worthy man.

She was not a child wife of thirteen or fourteen years like the common run, but was a lovely woman who could appreciate love and affection.

In the evening she bathed, sprinkled henna on her finger nails, donned costly ear-rings and clasped a diamond necklace around her neck. She received many gifts from her husband, who was always thinking of some new trifle to make her eyes sparkle. She dined with him in a brilliant coloured satin Moorish gown. He refused to have his slaves dance for him. His wife could dance beautifully, and he delighted to watch her. Although he never mentioned her name to his friends, he took great pride in possessing such an exquisite wife.

It is a strange sentiment crystalized into a rigid custom which forbids the Arabian men in their social intercourse to refer to, or inquire about affairs of the harem. There is good reason why the Arab mind, which has shown high merit in other fields of letters has produced so little romantic literature. The material has always been locked and sealed from view.

"It would be wonderful to stay here always, wouldn't it?" he said while stroking Therriya's hair after her scarf dance.

"Oh! but dearest, won't we stay here alone always? I love it here. I never want to leave."

"But, my sweetheart, this has already been a long honeymoon, as the English say. We have been here for six months. Messages have arrived from my home advising me that I am needed there. They say that I am neglecting them, and should return. Heaven knows I don't want to. My pleasure lies with you right here on this divan, among these cushions."

As he said this he blew rings of smoke into the air. He was at peace with the world, and although duty called him hence he knew that he could not drag himself away from

this bliss for weeks. He only meant to warn Therrya that sooner or later they would have to go.

"But, my husband, is this not your home? Have you another house? Oh dear! I thought that with you so young and handsome that I would be the first. Or perhaps you mean that your mother wants you to come home for a little. You may go, dearest, if you will promise not to stay long. I couldn't bear waiting very long. I will be patient and will wait a few days. The flowers and the palm trees will have to keep me company. Sometimes I will gaze at the sea from the balcony for pastime. Perhaps the colours of the sunset will divert me a little, but oh, I will miss you so!"

"No, my love, I am too selfish to part from you for even a few days. When I leave here I will take you with me. You will have to say "goodbye" to the sea, to the palm trees, and to the roses and jasmines here, but there is a smaller garden in my other home, it is just on the outskirts of Tangier. It is the one where I first saw your sweet face. You may be happy there, but you will never be as completely gay as you are here. You were only one night there and you saw very little of the rooms and the ménage. I hate to make this change, but unfortunately I cannot alter my past. The past is that which makes it vital for me to go there soon. I love you too much to deceive you. Of course I could leave you here and could pretend to be making fleeting visits to my parents, a clever little alibi for your peace of mind. But I must tell you now. I have two wives!"

"Oh Allah! Oh dear! I wish that you had never had any wife. Oh! Oh! Oh dear! I wish that I could have been the first, and could have won your love so entirely and

completely that you could never think of taking another wife." She began to sob and turned away from her husband.

"But, my dearest, I married when I was very young. I was only fourteen when my parents decided that I should wed Doorga, a woman from an enormously wealthy family. My bride was plain looking and older than I. She is very plain and old now. Her face has numerous wrinkles, but she is my wife and is the first, and what is more demands that I return to her. I felt like divorcing her when I first saw her face, but I was too young to manage a divorce.

Besides, her family with their wealth and influence could have greatly injured my parents. Now you see if we go to my town house you will have no cause to feel jealous of her. I have no love for her, only a sense of duty towards her."

"Yes, but what about the second wife? Why did you marry her?"

"Oh! the second. Could you blame me for taking a chance in finding a pretty wife after having to face a plain one for several years? I simply couldn't bear to look at her continually. When I was twenty-one I gambled again. Zemzem, the second, was very comely, and quite sweet. I lived happily with her and . . ."

"And why did you marry a third time when your second wife was pretty? Why did you marry me? Now will I have to share my love with her?"

"No, darling, no, I love you alone now. You see my second wife is about thirty years old, and she is developing wrinkles and is losing her sweet disposition. I was rather tired of her when I married you."

"Then, if you don't love them, don't take me to that hateful house. Just stay here in this paradise. You surely don't need them."



She looked pleadingly into his eyes.

"That is not the question. I am their husband, no matter what my affection is for them. I have to support them, and I will have to live with them. It was wonderful having you alone all these months, but in a few weeks time we will have to return to duty."

Therrya made the best of the last seven weeks, and she practised all the arts to increase her husband's love.

Mohamed Matrah brought her to his house in Tangier and introduced her to Doorga and Zemzem, his two wives, and devoutly hoped that they would be happy and congenial.

But the two older women at once noticed Therrya's beauty and youth. They were envious, but if their husband had not eternally caressed her, and continually shown her his undivided devotions, they might have tolerated her. They became frightfully jealous when he came from his worldly affairs and took Therrya by the hand and strolled with her into the garden, and sympathised with her when she seemed sad.

He was never rude to his other wives. He was always courteous when they approached him, but he never sought them out. His first question when he entered the house was: "Where is Therrya?"

Therrya tried to be civil to Doorga and Zemzem, even friendly, because she wanted peace above all. She hated to live in the harem, but since no other arrangement was feasible, she sought to make the best of it.

But the two jealous women avoided their rival. Hand in hand they strolled in the garden together. These erstwhile enemies, now united by the bonds of the common scorn of the present harem favourite.

Mohamed Matrah had a separate apartment set aside for

his last wife, his favourite, his darling, where he spent his evenings and where he could forget the dismal looks of the other two.

Therrya had been made very sad by Doorga and Zemzem, but here she gave herself up to sheer joy with her loving husband.

But the other two wives ?

Well, they were two women scorned, and being two were doubly devilish, and human nature was stronger than religious vows. There came in due and natural course, that within them which called to heaven—or to—for vengeance.

And as they walked and talked together they plotted.

Finally under cover of the dusk of evening, with spades in hand they sought the cemetery, and now there was little fear that their master would miss them.

From a new made grave they unearthed a corpse, stripped the flesh from one hand, chopped it into bits, and with the aid of flour and water with which they were provided, prepared little white balls, ready for baking.

The body returned to its place, and the earth replaced, they stealthily returned to Matrah's house. Once within the walls they had no fear. It required but little time over the kitchen stove to finish what seemed to be the matza balls in a stew, a favourite dish in Morocco, and one usually prepared by the hands of a wife.

Bearing this sinister olive branch, they presented themselves at the apartment of the "favourite," and Doorga, the elder woman, thus addressed her :

" Pray accept this little offering from both of us. At last we have decided that we wish to be your friends. Most likely our husband will wed again. We know well his fickle

nature—and we three will need each other. We should be friends in this very little world which is ours.”

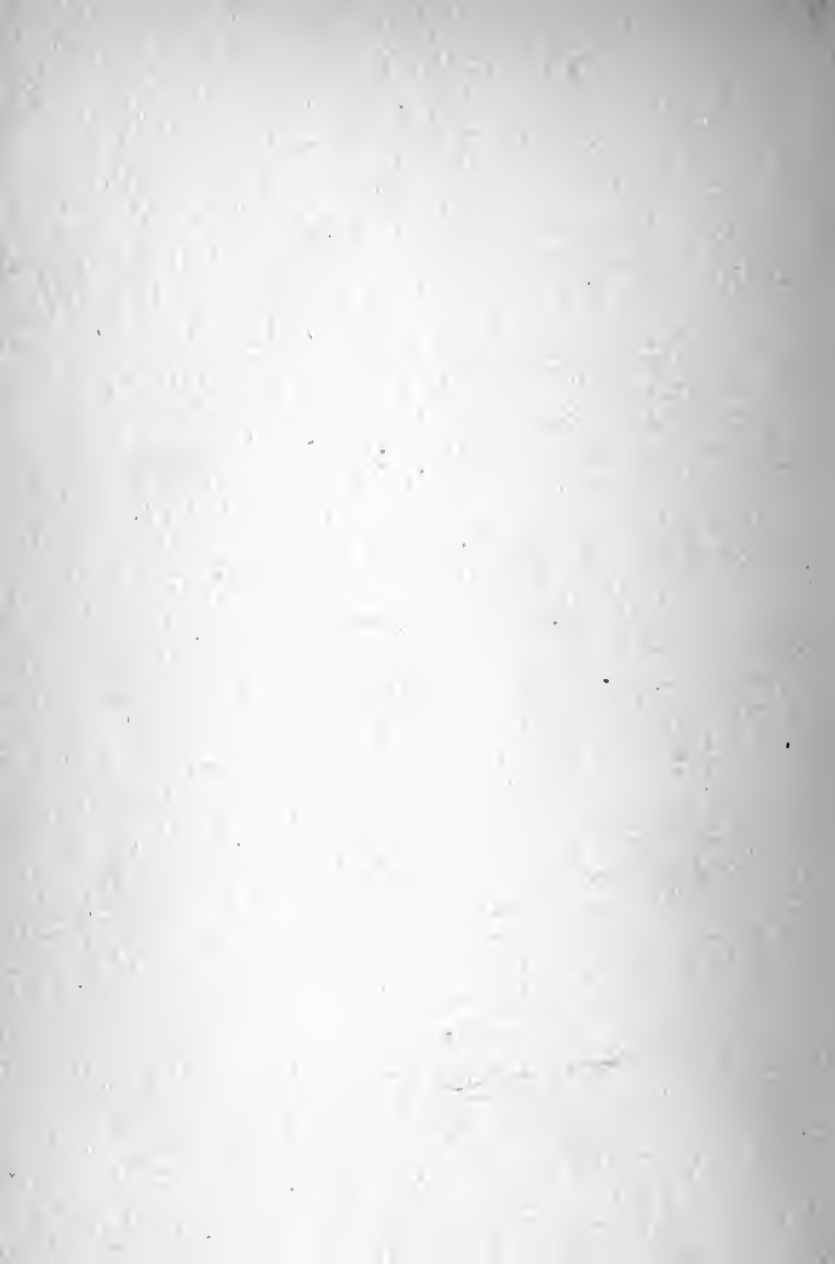
Therrya showed herself entirely amiable, gladly accepted the pledge of peace, and ate the concoction before their eyes. (However she was entirely untouched by the hint that she too might in her turn be cast from the heart of their master).

Following this scene entire harmony seemed to reign and the lord of the harem was greatly pleased.

But Therrya rapidly failed in health, grew pale and thin, even though her beauty still shone from her glorious eyes.

Her husband's anxiety was beyond words. The most skilled physicians were entirely baffled. All their efforts failed. The two friends watched this work of the slow, but deadly poison with inward glee.

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## Change of Mind

“WILL you marry me, Elizabeth? You will do me great honour if you will consent to be my wife.” Thus proposed Henry Wilcox.

“Why, Henry! What made you think of me in that light?” replied Elizabeth in astonishment.

“Perhaps it was the light of the sun playing about your pretty face.”

Elizabeth was seated at a table in a Leipzig beer garden. Henry sat opposite her with his arms stretched over the table, almost upsetting the two *steins*.

At that moment Henry noticed his German Professor approaching. He quickly rose to his full height and made the Professor a deep bow.

“*Ich habe die Ehre, Herr Professor,*” he said in the most respectful tone.

The Professor returned the deep bow and joined his family at a neighbouring table. Elizabeth admired the dignity and polished manner of Henry. She had come to admire very much the German dignified formality, and it rather pleased her to imagine herself the wife of an American who had acquired something of this charming formality while in pursuit of his studies at the University. Elizabeth Taft, of Alburn, New York, had come to Leipzig to study music. Her masters gave her little encouragement that she would ever become a real musician, but she did love the piano, and she loved still more the consciousness of being a student at the great Conservatory of Music at Leipzig, and in the last

quarter of the nineteenth century this was the thing to do with Americans with any musical tendency.

Elizabeth was a slave to the mode. No society fad was too ridiculous for her to follow. At this time the most ultra-fashionable street dress had a train which swept the side walk for several feet. The real art consisted in the proper handling of this extension. It is rather hard to describe, but it consisted in the stops for a chat and the like when the wearer would step backward a foot or two so that the end of the skirt would be somewhat in advance of the front of her toes. Seeming to be disturbed by this she would manipulate her foot in a quite indescribable fashion and with her heel kick the encumbrance back in the direction of its proper place. This trick was always done just so. All society women did it, it was a sure sign that one was up to the latest fashion. Of course Elizabeth did it on every occasion, and most artistically. This is an extreme illustration, but it requires such an example to describe Elizabeth's psychology, and to understand her infatuation for the German seriousness in following the extremist formalities of polite society, and how predisposed she would be in favour of an American who had acquired these formalities.

"Well, to return to my question. What is your answer?" asked Henry.

"I am pleased that you reminded me of the question. Your exquisite exchange of greetings with the Professor might have made you forget it altogether," returned Elizabeth.

"Forget proposing marriage to a charming young lady! Could a man ever forget such an important step. It might be considered the most important in his life."

"Will you be a constant and loyal fiancé if I say yes?"

"That question is unfair. First answer my question and then I will answer yours."

"Tut! tut! you are like all Americans, too much in a hurry. I will teach you patience. Now don't speak, Henry, just listen to me. I am going to the Harts Mountains with my sister to-morrow. While I am wandering alone through the dark forests I will think about you, your character, and all your attributes, and your interesting proposal."

"That is very kind of you indeed if you are quite certain that you cannot decide now. But don't you realise that I will be in terrible suspense until I hear the verdict? If I am in Leipzig and you are in the Harts Mountains, miles away, how am I to visualize your sweet mouth saying 'yes' or that fatal 'no.'"

"Wait, and be patient, Henry, until——, don't you love me enough to wait until doomsday?"

"Elizabeth! Elizabeth! do not forget that this suspense will be agony."

"Oh, Henry, you are so knightly in your ways, just remember how the knights of old waited and waited for their adored mistresses."

Elizabeth and her sister Eleen went to the mountains. A few days later Eleen's fiancé joined them. The brooks, the wild flowers, and the mountain paths all lent themselves to create the most romantic atmosphere for the two lovers. Elizabeth walked alone in the forest and thought about Henry. When she saw Eleen and her fiancé strolling off together she felt envious and wished for Henry.

"He would be so gallant, and would carry my lunch for me in his rucksack, and would ask me to lean on his arm

when I became tired," thought the dainty Elizabeth. "I wish that Henry was here to share this exquisite view with me, of the valleys and fields of grain resembling a patch quilt, the quaint village with tiled roofs and the church in the centre with its tall steeple, looking like a flock of sheep hovering about the shepherd."

After two weeks' consideration of Henry's proposal Elizabeth wrote him that he might join them in the mountains if he wished to hear the verdict.

To her utter amazement she waited for his answer a whole week. She had of course made up her mind and her letter was tantamount to a "yes."

When Henry's letter finally arrived it read :—

"Dear Elizabeth,

How can I express myself, I also have been giving the deepest thought to this matter. After the deepest reflection I have come to the conclusion that it would be unwise for me to join you in the mountains. I have come to the conclusion that you are far too good for me and that I am entirely unworthy of you. Besides there are years of study ahead of me before I can be established as a University Professor and in a situation to meet the responsibilities of a home. Sentiment should always wait upon expediency. It was most unfortunate that my impulses found voice when we were last together. It does sometimes happen that great beauty, great charm, and superb intelligence force one to romantic speech. I have surely had my lesson. I will return to my books, and I will not forget your injunctions to patience.

Your most unworthy,

HENRY."



Elizabeth ran with the letter to Eleen's room, handed it to her sister, and dropped to the floor completely crushed by this humiliation.

All she could say was—"What in the world caused this change of mind?"

Elizabeth was not broken-hearted, the matter did not go that deep.

The image of no man had been in the depth of her nature, but the domestic ideal had always been there. She had consciously or sub-consciously exercised the arts of fascination upon certain men, carefully selected, and she was conscious of some power that way, and she indulged a good deal of pride in it (hence her humiliation over the Henry incident). She had employed these arts not on Henry alone but upon several, and several had been sufficiently touched to follow her up. She flattered herself that all the members of the approved list were sufficiently touched if ever she should choose to give them the requisite degree of encouragement to precipitate declarations.

None of them had been in fact extremely eligible. With all of them marriage would have been a hazardous undertaking. Most of them were by no means settled in life, but only getting ready to commence to begin. A long engagement would in each case have been inevitable. One was a journalist sufficiently established, but he was the only support of his widowed mother and younger sisters. Most of them were post graduates, looking forward to academic positions in the rather indefinite future.

Elizabeth had reached the point when she would soon be no longer young, and when it seemed to her better judgement that the road to her ideal should be at least definite and clearly defined if it could not be short. She thought it

might be time to apply the requisite degree of fascination.

Henry's impulsive outburst was the first fruit of her resolution.

After an hour of poignant agony because of her humbled pride, as well as her keen disappointment, she found herself again casting about. She passed the others in review. George was entirely out of it. He had become engaged to Agnes. Sam had three years before him at Wisconsin. So on down the list until she came to Edward.

Edward was in all points different from Henry. He had no superficial polish, no polite mannerisms, no self-assurance, on the other hand he was timid and awkward. But his record was exceedingly good, and his future prospects sufficiently bright. He was a sturdy, earnest, hard-working fellow. Everyone would call him solid. Everyone would expect him to attain a moderate success in life. He had not yet completed his preparation for a career at the law. But a partnership was waiting for him with his brother who was well established. Another consideration which may have had unusual weight at this time was that his devotion had been of a considerably longer duration than any of the others. Elizabeth had always felt quite sure of Edward if ever it should seem expedient to encourage him to the full length.

So before the sun had set upon the day of the arrival of Henry's fatal letter another letter was posted to Edward King containing such a glow of friendly feeling that he might well think that the great distance which had separated them for the past two years had made her heart grow fond.

Sufficient time elapsed and no response.

Elizabeth hastened her return to her native land and advised Edward by cable the name of her ship and the

approximate date of its arrival in New York.

Several ship letters were handed to her by the steward. She hastily and anxiously scanned the writing but Edward's hand was not there.

Arriving home she made it her first business to advise Edward by mail, and to tell him that she awaited his welcome after so long an absence. No response.

After a short interval she wrote a letter of some length to Edward referring to their long acquaintance and, the deep friendship she had felt for him, and also to the several messages which had elicited no response. She told him quite frankly that she felt he owed her an explanation. Still no response.

Finally the matter was cleared up by a girl cousin of Edward's who was also a very good friend of Elizabeth. In the course of a call she said :

" You cannot imagine what has happened to Edward. You could never guess. Well, it was just this. He had made repeated calls upon another girl, escorted her to an event or two, but aside from these attentions he had betrayed no sign of tender sentiment."

Elizabeth thought, " How exactly like Edward that was."

" But this girl," continued her guest, " allowed no barrier of bashfulness to stand in her way. So one evening when he was taking his leave she seized the extended hand and threw her free arm about his neck and kissed him. Thus was our Edward finally captured by a *coup de force*. Being once in he knew well that he lacked the resources to extricate himself. The girl who had embraced him could not be other than his fiancé. His chivalry and also his manly sense of honour compelled him to that conclusion."

Elizabeth said nothing but she thought, " It is all perfectly

clear. Edward's sense of loyalty to his fiancé forbade him to reply to any of my messages."

"Edward would have made a splendid husband. He is not brilliant but he is solid.

Henry changed his mind. Did Edward change his ? "

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MISS BURK

# Teas and Tease

## CHAPTER I. THE CALL.

A SMALL coal fire glowing in a grate tried desperately to warm the large sitting room which looked chilly with the blue twilight casting its glow through the windows. It was one of those cold summer days in England when the thought of leaving any fireside shoots shivers through one as it did through Miss Burk, who was taking her departure. Her hostess, Mrs. Harrison, was a widow of about thirty, had fair hair, a rather pretty face with laughing and slightly cynical eyes. Miss Burk was a spinster of about thirty-five, with red cheeks, and I am afraid, a rather reddish nose. Her brown determined looking eyes seemed anxious to beat time before her grey-streaked, brown hair should grow white. She was taking one of those lengthy farewells which women adore and which men abhor, since convention requires them to stand as long as the ladies loiter on their feet. The ladies are never conscious of fatigue with their repetitions of good-byes, and "by-the-by I forgot to tell you, etc." But the poor gentlemen grow fidgety, feel weak, and long for a speedy exit.

Luckily there were no men to suffer at this farewell.

"Well, good-bye, Miss Burk, so glad you called, can't you have tea with me Wednesday?"

"So good of you to ask me, Mrs. Harrison, but I have an engagement for tea that afternoon."

"Oh! how annoying," complained Mrs. Harrison, "but do have tea with me anyway, and send some kind of regrets by post."

"It would be jolly to have tea with you, Mrs. Harrison, but I have a beastly conscience about keeping every engagement."

"Oh, ho!" laughed Mrs. Harrison. "It must be hard to be a good Nonconformist. Now if you were a good Roman Catholic you could accept my invitation, confess your sin to the priest, say a few prayers, burn a candle, and all would be well with your soul."

"Oh! Mrs. Harrison, I do hope you are not trying to convert me to the Roman Catholic Church. I would feel terribly if that were your object. Let me speak seriously about this matter."

"Oh! dear no, I am a member of the Church of England, but as a matter of fact am usually outside all church walls."

"But why then did you use that kind of persuasive argument to make it possible for me to accept your invitation?"

"Miss Burk, please never take any nonsense of mine seriously. In the first place you couldn't join any church before Wednesday. In the second I was only interested in your scrupulous conscience, and religious austerity, and was wondering what you would be like as a good Catholic. No matter what faith you choose your nature would bind you to the most rigorous loyalty."

"Dear! dear! I hope I will never be led outside the Wesleyan faith."



"My dear Miss Burk, I will stop upsetting you and your faith as I see you are already quite disturbed, but can't I bring you round to tea Wednesday? You are always so religious and good; and are for ever allowing your conscience to control your actions; but would just one departure from its empire be very wicked?"

"I must be firm. I cannot accept your invitation and now I must be leaving as it is quite late. Good evening, Mrs. Harrison."

"Good evening, Miss Burk. I am rather sorry that your refusal is final because a number of gentlemen are coming whom I would like you to know. Well, good-bye."

"Good-bye. Oh! eh! by the by, I am frightfully sorry to refuse your invitation—what time—Oh! I, ah! so sorry I can't come."

"Yes, so am I, such a pity other engagements and a conscience will interfere, isn't it? They are such interesting gentlemen coming, a prominent lawyer, a doctor, who has quite a reputation in surgery, and some young society men, but oh! ah! good afternoon."

"Oh! good day, I must be off, thank you, I almost forgot my umbrella in my flurry and hurry. Such a wet evening, isn't it? By the way, what time is your tea to be on Wednesday? At 3.30?"

"No, between 4.30 and 5, the regular tea-time. Just why do you care to know, if I may ask?"

"No reason at all, I must be off, good-bye. Oh! you see I eh, eh, thought, if your tea were especially early I might work both in, and go on to Mrs. Woods a trifle late."

"No, I can't change the time because when gentlemen are told to come at a certain hour that hour becomes fixed in their minds, and they can't change it. Now I mustn't

keep you from your engagements, pardon me if I tell you that it is growing late."

"Oh! that is alright, I have no urgent engagement at present. Oh! Oh! How late will your guests linger?"

"That is rather a delicate question to ask of a hostess. How late depends upon how entertaining I may be, and how well entertained my guests will be."

"Well, Mrs. Harrison, quite frankly, I do wish to come round Wednesday, so I'll drop in between 5.30 and 6, after having tea at Mrs. Woods."

"All right, I'll keep the kettle boiling."

"Oh! no, don't make me any tea, I am not a tea fiend. Tea at one home will be plenty for one afternoon."

"What a compliment! to come to see me for my society alone and not at all for tea."

"Eh! You will not be alone, there will be some gentle——. I must have misunderstood your last remark."

"Oh, of course, I will not be alone, the gentlemen will be present all right, you can calm yourself, but I am so sorry to be forced to believe that the opposite sex can lead you from your faith and your conscience and be the cause of your downfall."

"Oh! don't believe that, you're terribly mistaken. I am not in the least interested in gentlemen."

"Don't, don't, Miss Burk, please, your denial of my discovery confirms it completely. I am bitterly disappointed in you! Cheerio until Wednesday."

"Oh! dear oh! dear Mrs. Harrison——."

"Good night, Miss Burk," and the poor agitated caller was hustled out of the door with a final "good-night" ringing in her ears.

## CHAPTER 2.

## THE PREPARATION FOR TEAS.

"I wish the tea with gentlemen were going to be an evening affair," thought Miss Burk, as she sat before her mirror in her neat bedroom gazing at her neck and shoulders. It was a pity that no sympathetic adviser was there to inform her that the wrinkles of the neck and arms are the sure signs of age.

Miss Burk, in spite of her piercing eyes, had failed to notice these signs, they may have focussed on the reflection of her red cheeks in the mirror. A rosy complexion is always considered a sign of youth, and happily with her those cheeks would never fade because there were veins beneath the epidermis which would ensure a perpetual glow. She had a stereotyped notion, derived from novels and short stories, that men are drawn towards the physical charms of the ivory neck of the heroine in a low bodice, but how could she appear in a low necked dinner gown at two conventional English teas?

This afternoon, when she would meet gentlemen, must be triumphant, and how to look winning was her query. "Since it is summer I will wear my light blue silk frock with the puffy sleeves, surely they can't expect me to come in a drab subdued gown on a day in August, and besides, light colours make me look girlish and sweet."

Her attempts to look winning were rather pathetic when one looked at her gaunt figure in a blue, styleless dress which might have become a comely country lass.

## CHAPTER 3.

## THE SECOND TEA.

Miss Burk felt as if she were to be presented to the queen, or rather to be the centre of knightly courtiers, as she tucked streaks of grey hair under her hat of roses and plumes, and powdered her nose until it looked like a lump of snow.

To her amazement, when the maid ushered her into the drawing room she found no one there. "What could it mean," she thought. "Could Mrs. Harrison have played a wicked joke on me, or have her charms been insufficient to detain her guests until now? Surely I am not too late as it is only 5.30." But the maid soon explained that the mistress and her guests had taken a stroll after tea and would be in presently.

The time seemed an age but it was only fifteen minutes when a group of dashing young men and pretty girls entered the room. Mrs. Harrison was among them, and made an attractive hostess to the easy going party. She introduced them all to Miss Burk, who tried her best to be charming, but who was stiff, and simply failed to talk glibly with the gay spirited gentlemen. Her usually flowing tongue, which had kept up a lively flutter of talk at Mrs. Wood's ladies' tea, had deserted her here. She failed utterly to get *en rapport* with the party. While the others were caught up in the stream of talk she was left floundering on the banks. She had to suffer the humiliation of being a wall-flower, and even failed in her attempts to wear a smiling mask. She wanted to blame someone for her misery but whom could she blame? Her hostess, who had invited her, and who had introduced the men to her? Could she expect

Mrs. Harrison to force them to stop near her chair ? They felt that they were quite busy enough paying compliments to the pretty girls in dainty tea frocks. Across the room she caught bits of their idle prattle.

" I say, you do look jolly in that gown, Miss May."

" Oh ! you mean you feel jolly after drinking our hostess's superb tea."

" Now, if I were a Spanish cavalier, Miss Anne, I would compare your dark eyes to black coals of fire."

" Luckily for you and me, Mr. Henderson, we don't need burning coals to-day or else we would not have strolled down the path of roses just now."

Mrs. Harrison was not unmindful of the poor, neglected Miss Burk sitting in the corner. She felt sorry for her, and felt also a little guilty for the way she had drawn her into coming that afternoon. Feeling that she had been sufficiently punished for her weakness for the opposite sex, she took her friend, Mr. Jones, aside to consult with him about how to relieve the situation.

" Mr. Jones, maybe you have noticed that my guest, Miss Burk, is sadly neglected. I really must have someone here who will be happy to converse with her. What say you to fetching Mr. Andrews ? He lives quite near, and is generally at home."

" Heavens ! No, Mrs. Harrison, she would curse you if you brought him to meet her. Why he is a short old hunchback. No woman could tolerate his physical defects."

" Please bring him here at once."

She immediately took Miss Burk into a small sitting room, and as soon as Mr. Andrews appeared she closeted him with her for half-an-hour. After the half-hour was over she took Mr. Jones to the sitting room and he was amazed to see

Miss Burk grasp her hostess's hands and exclaim : " You were a darling to introduce Mr. Andrews to me. He is most delightful and above all he takes an interest in me, and just think, he told me that I was beautiful."

Mr. Jones could not quickly grasp this psychological phenomenon. " Is it true," he thought, " that any woman can be attracted by a man, no matter how grotesque or ugly, if he tells her that she is ravishingly beautiful, the loveliest creature on earth, and makes all those flourishing compliments which transport women into the dizzy heights of happiness ? "

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## The Star Guest

"MAY I have a soft boiled egg?" timidly asked an American lodger of the maid who was placing prunes, cream and porridge before one place. She brought no such delicacies to this lodger, but eventually served her a fried egg.

"Please, Miss, I never eat fried eggs and I asked for a boiled one." But the maid acted as if she were stone deaf, and left the dining room. Presently a young man with a Marcel wave appeared, and took the chair before the prunes. When he rang, the servant quickly bobbed in, and brought him a pot of tea, and later ham and bacon. All the lodgers recognized him to be the star guest, and all envied him his high position.

Miss Black, the timid lodger, after a twenty minutes' wait, induced the maid to exchange her fried egg for a boiled one.

She changed her "digs" from Tavistock Square, London, W.C., to Gordon Place, and there hoped for better service. She first discovered that there was no key to her bedroom, and asked the maid, "May I have a key?"

"There are no keys to any of the doors; but everyone is honest here and you need have no fear."

This fact made Miss Black a little nervous, but she made no comment, and began to write a letter. Presently the maid knocked and entered.

"I just wished to assure you again that no one will come into your room to steal. Besides, Madame sleeps in the next room, and I sleep opposite her."

"That is all right, I suppose. Since you and Madame are on the same floor I will feel quite safe."

"Do you talk other languages beside English? English does not seem to be your native tongue," asked the maid.

"I talk French and German."

"*Ach! Sie sprechen deutsch,*" and after that all their conversation was carried on in German.

"I am from Zurich. Where in the German speaking world have you lived?"

"Lucerne, Leipzig, Berlin and other cities," said Miss Black.

"Oh! I also know Leipzig. I was there three years as the President of the Swiss Red Cross, during the war. My father was a wealthy man of affairs and little did I ever dream of being a "*Zimmer Madchen*."

"Have you been here long?"

"My father went bankrupt a few months ago, and died leaving a wife and seven children. I had to earn my living, so I came to London to work in this house. The family here are also German Swiss."

"Well, anyway," consoled Miss Black, "you are working for people of your own nationality."

"I have to work very hard here. I have to carry hot water to the rooms, serve breakfasts from eight until ten in the dining room, besides carrying half a dozen trays to the rooms. I have to make up all the beds, blacken all the shoes, and I am busy from morning until night."

"It must be hard on you after living a luxurious life."

"I am leaving to-morrow and am going to Switzerland."



Miss Black didn't know whether it would please the girl to tell her she was sorry, but she said, "Switzerland is a beautiful country to go to."

"I am not going because I wish to. I have been given notice. I will explain. One morning a German lodger was asking me some questions in the sitting room, and I was answering politely. I was not noticing another gentleman, a Russian, who is a naturalised Austrian, and has boarded here for some time. Well, this fair-haired Russian was admiring some pictures, and, as I walked towards the door, he suddenly gripped me and tried to kiss me. I was so amazed I had no time to think of screaming, but I covered my mouth with my hand. Suddenly the door opened and the Madame entered and said, "*Ach Gott!* Elsa, I never thought that of you."

"Really, Fräulein, I never did anything to make him think he could kiss me. I have been brought up to be a lady, and now that I am forced to be a maid, I never, never, allow men liberties."

"Didn't you explain the situation to Madame?"

"I did, but she wouldn't believe me and gave me a week's notice. I asked him to tell her that what he did was not because of any encouragement on my part, but he refused to help me. To-morrow I will have to leave England as the English Government does not allow foreigners to change their positions. The Government says they must stay in the place where they are destined to work before coming here. If they lose that position they must leave the country."

"I suppose this law is made to prevent foreign girls from taking the situations away from English girls," ventured Miss Black. Elsa knew nothing about the reason for the

law, all she was interested in was its existence.

"I will stop in Holland first and will try to obtain a position there, but it will be almost impossible without a reference. If I only had a reference from a previous employer I would have a first-class chance. If I fail there I will have to go home to Switzerland. You believe that I did not try to flirt with this Russian, don't you?"

"Yes, certainly I believe you were correct in your behaviour."

"He told me that he tried to kiss me because he thought of me all day, went wild when he saw me, and was crazy about me. I could not help his insolence, could I?" *Ich konnte nicht, dafür?"*

"Come on, Elsa," called a girl from another room.

"Yes, just a minute," said Elsa, opening the door a bit.

"That is the cousin of Madame who called me; she is mean."

"Come at once," rang out the voice again.

"I'll come. Be quiet. *Sie ist böse*, she doesn't look at life the way we do. Good night, Fräulein, sleep well."

"Good night."

The following morning Miss Black went into the dining room and Elsa took her butter plate away.

"I suppose she thinks that three butter balls are too many for me," thought Miss Black; but Elsa returned the plate with a dozen butter balls. She came again to ask, "Do you like the marmalade I have given you? I will give you strawberry jam and crab apple jelly, or any kind you please. Let me get you another brand."

"No, thank you, I like orange marmalade better than any."

Then Elsa hovered around the Russian Austrian and said,

"You know that it is through you that I have to leave to-day."

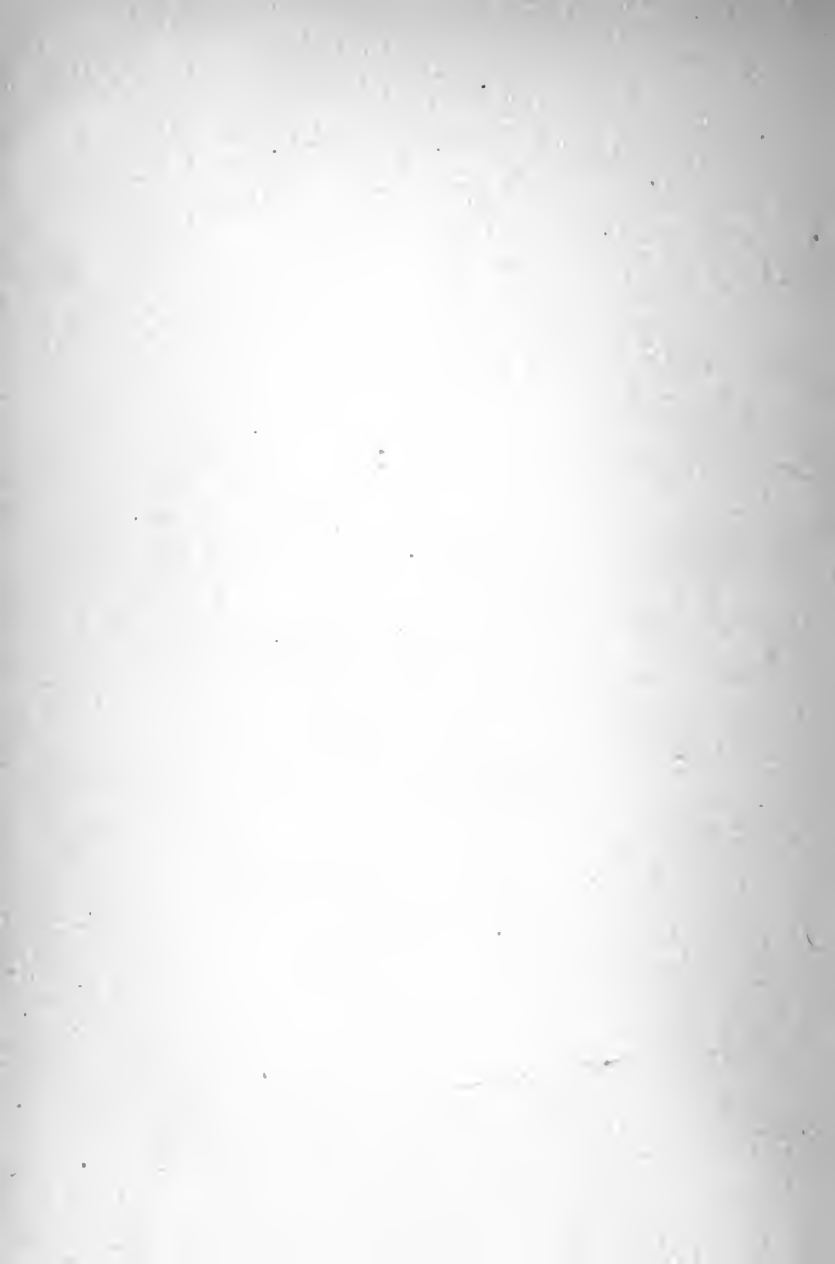
"I will miss you, Elsa, I will leave myself in a day or so. I am going to Germany and from there will fly to Russia."

"I am not asking you to miss me, I want you to feel remorse for causing me to lose my job," she said indignantly, and she flew off to Miss Black to heap her with attentions.

Miss Black smiled, and thought, "The other day no one bothered to serve me, and to-day I am the star guest, while the other lodgers receive mediocre attentions. I wonder why I have risen in the world. I suspect that it is because I was a sympathetic listener to a girl in trouble. It may have given Elsa relief to pour out her woes to someone who believed her, and now she wishes to show me her gratitude.

"But to-morrow I will fall from the height of my position as star guest because Elsa will no longer be serving here."

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TEDDY—THE BURGLAR

# The Bogeyman

## ACT I.

SCENE I.—*The Misses Walker's drawing room in Plymouth. The walls are tan coloured. The window curtains and table covers are burnt orange silk. The furniture is brown mahogany. Time—half-past six, September 6th, 1924.*

Miss Elizabeth Walker is sewing. Miss Charlotte Walker is looking at the clock on the mantel of the fireplace. Elizabeth wears a blue organdy frock. Charlotte wears a tan taffeta afternoon gown.

*Charlotte*: What time is it, Elizabeth?

*Elizabeth*: Half-past-six. Can't you see the time? I expect you need glasses.

*Charlotte*: Not at all, I just wondered how your wrist watch compared with the clock, which is often unreliable. As for glasses, I expect you would love to see me wear them.

*Elizabeth*: Why?

*Charlotte*: You know very well why. You would enjoy seeing me less beautiful than I am, and then you might become the more attractive of the two Misses Walker in the eyes of our acquaintances in Plymouth. At present I am not interested in them but am wondering if Edward received my telegram and if he is coming to-night. Maybe he was too late to catch the last afternoon train out of Eastbourne.

*Elizabeth*: That is why you're always asking the time to-day! I surmise what you are plotting. You hope to win

him exclusively for yourself. Don't forget that he is an old friend of the family, and belongs to us.

*Charlotte* : There are only two of us left now, and I feel that I was always his preference ; so you must not interfere this evening, my sister Elizabeth.

*Elizabeth* : How priceless ! I suppose you will send me to the kitchen to dine.

*Charlotte* : I expect that would look rather indelicate but I wish I could.

*Elizabeth* : Charlotte, be careful in your suit or else he will discover what a quarrelsome sister you are, and won't care to chance taking a quarrelsome wife.

*Charlotte* : You surely don't mean to insinuate that I am trying to marry him, you impudent hussy !

*Elizabeth* : If you wish to prove the insinuation to be false you will leave him alone with me all the evening.

*Maid enters.*

*Maid* : Mr. Harrington is in the Hall. Shall I show him in ?

*Charlotte* : Yes, Agnes, and first relieve him of his coat and hat.

*Exit Maid.*

*Charlotte* : Now, Elizabeth, for heaven's sake, let me do the talking.

*Elizabeth* : Won't you let him talk either ? One would imagine that you were an M.P. about to deliver an address in a City Hall of some important town.

*Enter Edward, out of breath.*

*Charlotte* : Hush, Elizabeth. Oh, Edward, I am very glad to see you again, it is so long since you have been here.

(*Charlotte goes forward and gives him her hands.*)

*Edward* : You are delighted, Charlotte, I am sure,



because your face is beaming with smiles. But, Charlotte, I thought that something terrible had happened, and I took the first train I could make to Plymouth. Hullo, Elizabeth, over there in the background. Haven't you a word of welcome for your old friend ?

*Elizabeth* : How d'ye do, Edward. Here is my hand, but I must admit that Charlotte has been subduing my usual ardour and good spirits.

*Edward* : Why, Elizabeth, what is amiss ? How long has the subduing process been going on ?

*Elizabeth* : Only the last half hour, to be exact, but it was all caused by the anticipation of your arrival. Now take that as a complimentary speech of welcome.

*Edward* : Thank you, but Charlotte, Elizabeth, I am still at sea. Has the subduing process to do with my being sent for ? To appear at once without time for an adjustment of my own affairs ? Candidly speaking, it caused me a good deal of embarrassment to leave Eastbourne this special evening. I came here expecting a tragedy. I wondered what my part in it could be, but being an old friend I felt it my first duty to come ; so off I came, and now ? Well girls, supply your humble servant with the explanation.

*(Charlotte looks worried).*

*Elizabeth* : Let me withdraw as I had nothing to do with sending for you. It was entirely Charlotte's doing. Pardon me while I dress for dinner.

*Edward* : Certainly, Elizabeth, I must presently return to my hotel to dress for dinner myself.

*(He bows to Elizabeth).*

*(Exit Elizabeth).*

*(Edward turns to Charlotte).*

*Edward* : So you are the culprit, my fair lady. Now confess.

*Charlotte* : Oh, Edward, it will keep until after dinner.

*Edward* : But why not tell me now, pretty lady ?

*Charlotte* : If you wait we will have a topic for discussion later. Please excuse me as I must also dress, or Elizabeth will outshine me.

(*Edward bows*).

*Edward* : You are both extremely pretty and it is absurd to think of comparison.

(*Charlotte's expression is dubious. Exit Charlotte*).

(*Enter Maid with lamp, which she places on the table*).

*Edward* : (*Addressing the Maid in an angry voice*). You women are all alike. You love to keep a secret which you mean to tell in the end. You keep it just to aggravate a man and drive him into begging and pleading to have his curiosity satisfied.

(*The Maid looks at Edward with blank expression*).

(*Curtain falls*).

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## ACT II.

SCENE I.—*A Conservatory with glass windows, containing palms and flowers. Large folding doors open into a pink dining room beyond the conservatory. The room is decorated with old rose furnishings and old rose silk curtains.*

*The Misses Walker and Edward are at table in dinner dress. Candles, with old rose shades, light the table. Charlotte is wearing a low-necked, white, shining satin gown. Elizabeth wears a white taffeta silk gown. The rays of the moon light the conservatory. The Maid is serving sweets. In a few minutes they stroll into the conservatory and sit down at little tables while the Maid serves them coffee. They smoke cigarettes. Elizabeth*

*puts a record on the victrola and dances a scarf dance with a purple coloured veil she has been wearing around her neck. Edward watches her dance and looks pleased. Charlotte looks displeased and turns her head away. Elizabeth stops dancing.*

*Edward*: Thank you very much, Elizabeth, I enjoyed your dancing ever so much. You have always been gifted with that art, haven't you?

*Charlotte*: How do you like the conservatory, Edward, which father added to the old house?

*Edward*: It is very pretty.

*Charlotte*: What do you think of the century plant which will soon bloom? See the beginnings of the buds.

*Edward*: Curious, but you know I am a real estate man who deals in lots of houses. I am not a botanist and know naught of strange plants. Personally I wouldn't care to possess a plant whose blossom I could only enjoy once in my life.

*Elizabeth*: My, but you have been good, not to ask about the tragedy.

*Charlotte*: Elizabeth, you did not need to bring up an unpleasant topic, which had been forgotten.

*Edward*: Not forgotten, but I felt that you wanted me to beg and plead for an answer, so my ugly disposition sought not to gratify your wish.

*Elizabeth*: Ha! ha! ha! he is displeased with you, Charlotte. Now comes my chance for conversation after keeping my mouth shut for a long time. Come over here, Edward, and sit beside me on the sofa.

*Edward*: I will be delighted to come, my pretty little Elizabeth. I am really quite annoyed with Charlotte for trying to excite my curiosity. Now tell me about yourself.

*Elizabeth* : Oh, I have just been doing the usual routine of work which every librarian does I expect. Before one enters that occupation one fancies it must be fascinating to live among interesting books, but after a few months one wearies of the stuffy library, of the plain people who exchange books with their cards, while you stamp, stamp ; and as for books you grow so tired of seeing them everywhere you even develop a dislike for reading them.

*(Charlotte grows visibly irritated at seeing Edward and Elizabeth sitting cozily on the sofa together and she rises).*

*Charlotte* : I planned this evening's entertainment and I am not going to have it interfered with. Elizabeth, you go to the Bromptons' house. They are having friends in this evening and they have given us a standing invitation to their parties. I will telephone them to expect you.

*(She hurriedly walks to the telephone and sits down beside it.)*

*Elizabeth* : I don't want to see the Bromptons. I can visit them any evening I like, but it is once in a blue moon I have the opportunity of conversing with Edward.

*(Edward touches her hand a second).*

*Edward* : Don't leave me, Elizabeth, I want you to stay because I find you most congenial.

*Charlotte* : Yes, and a little too congenial. *(Charlotte, talking into the telephone)* : Hullo, Dock 7876. Hullo ! may I speak to Mrs. Brompton ? Is this Mrs. Brompton speaking ? Hullo ! Mrs. Brompton, this is Charlotte Walker. How is everyone ? How is Kitty ?—all well ? I am so glad—yes—yes—you are having an informal dance—Oh ! I do wish I could come but I have a stiff knee from a fall I had the other day—Nothing serious, but it is too stiff

to dance the modern jazz—No, but I wish I could come and bring a young escort—he is an old friend who just came down from Eastbourne—yes, to see me—it was rather unexpected—I am sure Elizabeth would love to come—Hold the line a moment and I will ask her. (*Turns to Elizabeth*). Elizabeth, I will accept for you.

*Elizabeth* : I don't want to go.

*Charlotte* : She will be over in a few minutes. Don't bother to send anyone to call for her. Goodbye.

*Elizabeth* : How can you let her think that I am delighted to come when it is false ?

*Charlotte* : She says they have some extra young men and consequently need more girls. Now will you go ?

*Elizabeth* : Yes, but before I go I want to tell Edward a bit of news, what do you think ? Charlotte may go to Australia soon to teach in a school.

*Edward* : Indeed !

(*Elizabeth rises and shakes hands with Edward and holds his hand a little too long to be conventional.*

*She makes Charlotte a pert curtsy*).

*Elizabeth* : Good evening, Charlotte. Cheerio, Edward.

*Edward* : Good night, Elizabeth.

(*Exit Elizabeth*).

(*Edward seats himself again on the sofa. Charlotte leaves her chair and sits down beside him, heaving a sigh of apparent relief*).

*Charlotte* : I am afraid it has been a rather boring evening for you, Edward.

*Edward* : It always has been miserable when I am betwixt two fair damsels. What is that song in the "Beggars' Opera" about, "I could be happy with either if the other fair charmer were away ?" If there is a youth, no

matter what his merits or faults, in the company of two young ladies there is bound to be competition. Some proud asses enjoy such popularity, but personally it makes me decidedly uncomfortable.

*Charlotte (patting his arm)*: Then, for your sake I am glad my sister has gone.

*Edward*: To change the subject. I am going to bid you adieu, and will make you a bow to replace the curtsy your sister just made you, unless you reveal the reason for sending for me. *(He takes the telegram out of his pocket)*.

*(Charlotte looks worried and appears to be at a loss as to what to tell him)*.

*Charlotte*: Ah! Ah! You see I sent for you. Ah! Ah! because I wanted to see you once more before I sail to Australia.

*Edward*: So that is the cause of it? Well, you must be leaving directly to wish me to bid you God speed in person at once. Shall I take your luggage to the ship to-morrow. What is the name of the boat, and what hour does she sail? It is only a twenty minutes' walk from here to the docks, isn't it?

*Charlotte*: Please don't bundle me off so fast. Why, Edward, you act as if you didn't care a farthing if I sailed or not. Won't you be sorry when I am gone?

*Edward*: You will write me, won't you? Tell me all about the life out there.

*Charlotte*: You didn't answer my question, Edward, won't you feel lonely without me? I'll miss you.

*Edward*: Why, of course I'll miss you. You will seem such a waste of waters away. But you must remember that we don't see much of each other even in England, these days.

*Charlotte* : But it is not my fault that we don't. When my parents were living you used to spend weeks with us at a time, and we did have jolly times playing tennis and golf together, didn't we ? Why don't you come any more ?

*Edward* : Because how can I visit a house with two young spinsters as my hostesses without a sign of a chaperone ? But those were merry days, Charlotte, with every guest of your house parties in a holiday mood. I will always have sweet memories of them. You are a dear girl, and I wish you every happiness.

(*Edward rises*).

*Charlotte* : Don't leave me this early, sit down. Look at the moon through the glass. Edward, dear, can't you be a little sentimental, the way you were one night when we walked beside the sea ?

(*Edward smiles*).

*Edward* : Those days of youthful romance are over.

(*Charlotte looks distressed*).

*Charlotte* : Why, you are still young, and surely you don't mean to suggest that I am an old woman. I am only twenty-four and I look——.

*Edward* : Pardon, Charlotte. You are beautiful and youthful in appearance, but a boy of eighteen says rash things, and is sentimental, while a man of twenty-six has passed those days, and thinks of serious things.

*Charlotte* : You mean he thinks of marriage and not of silly love making.

*Edward* : He thinks of his profession, of politics of practical affairs, European wars, and in due time considers settling down.

*Charlotte* : I am glad you think of marriage, Edward. Now I think we have reached an understanding.

(Edward frowns and looks puzzled. Charlotte looks eager, and excited).

Charlotte: We will be awfully gay together. I'll tell my impudent Elizabeth when she returns.

(She strokes his arm and pays no attention to his face).

Charlotte: I am touched that you have kept those memories of us sacred. They are sweet indeed, but of course marriage is more serious. Let us go for a walk among the hills. Then, when Elizabeth comes home, she won't break up our happy—our happy——

(She takes a white Spanish scarf from her chair, wraps it around her, gently pulls Edward up from the sofa, takes his arm, opens the outside door of the conservatory at the right, they pass down some steps into the darkness).

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### ACT III.

SCENE I.—A large hall with the front door at the left, a high small window at the left, a door in back, a staircase at the right, a table with two small chairs. The walls are grey, and the silk window curtains, and silk curtain over the door in the back are grey-blue. The furniture is black. There is a seascape on the wall, and also a portrait of a young lady in a grey-blue gown.

Harry Smith, a small boy, climbs through the small window and then opens the door to Teddy Hall, the burglar, who struts in with his hands in his pockets.

Teddy: Thank you, Harry. The same old trick, aint it? Burglars have played it through the centuries, using youngsters like you to climb neatly through small windows, to permit big rough fellows like me to enter.

Harry: You're welcome, but really you don't look exactly rough to-night in that slick, fashionable suit which



we stole in that posh house last Saturday, while its inmates were at the theatre. Why the devil didn't you sell it to the old clothes dealer?

*Teddy*: I have my reasons. It is a different game I mean to play to-night. You know by your experiences with me, Harry, that I am generally invisible by night, and if not, it is no fault of mine, but the fault of the police or my clients, but to-night I intentionally purpose being visible. Cheerio, for a minute, and if you hear any approaching footsteps, warn me.

*(He opens wide the curtain and door at the back of the Hall).*

*Harry*: What are you going to steal?

*Teddy*: I am going to steal a letter.

*Harry*: I say, please let's leave this house. You're off your nut to-night. Nothing will come of a letter. I want gold, forks, and jewels, substantial booty, not a letter.

*Teddy*: You are ambitious, Harry, but I am more ambitious. I propose by this letter to procure me a rich wife.

*(Teddy goes through the doorway into a study and makes a light. He goes to a desk, opens it, and searches among the papers. There are bookshelves lining the walls. Harry peers through the door at him with an open mouth. He seems unmindful of everything except Teddy.)*

*Harry (aloud to himself)*: Well, I'll be hanged, and Teddy Hall is not a man given to drink.

*(Teddy, after glancing over several letters, chooses one letter, closes the desk, turns out the light, shuts the door and curtain, and returns to Harry).*

*Teddy*: Here are two shillings. I will have no more

work for you to-night, so be off. I'll step out also and will ring for the maid to admit me in the conventional manner. Rather stupid custom, isn't it? The lady of my eye is Miss Elizabeth Walker, as I learn from this letter. The contents refer to her having light hair, and to her wish to keep it from turning grey. Ah! H'm! she must be the one we saw leaving the house alone early in the evening, when we were in the shrubbery. The other lady we saw through the conservatory windows has dark hair. This letter is evidently from an intimate friend who signs herself with loads of love, Eleanor Hopkins. Now Miss Hopkins, poor soul, will be a mutual friend of Miss Walker and of mine this evening and she has asked me to call on her dear Elizabeth during my stay in Plymouth. Hurry out, Harry. Stop staring. You make me feel nervous and I need all my nerve to act the part of a suitor to a strange lady in a great stone house.

*(Exit Teddy and Harry through the front door. Presently a ring is heard, and several rings, and also knocking. The maid comes down the stairs while tying her apron around her waist. Her cap is missing and her hair is mussed. She looks sleepy, yawns, and seems annoyed. She opens the door and jumps in astonishment).*

*Teddy (seemingly at ease):* I would like to speak with Miss Elizabeth Walker, will you please take her my card?

*(Teddy hands the maid his card).*

*Maid:* It is too late, sir, I am sure that the mistress has retired.

*Teddy:* It is extremely important that I see her to-night, as I am leaving Plymouth in the morning. I would appreciate your seeing if she is up.

*Maid* : I will look, sir.

*(She puts the card on a small silver tray, which is lying on the table, and carries it up the stairs. After a bit she comes down, and looks into the rooms on the main floor, and comes back into the hall. She places the card tray on the table).*

*Maid* : I am sorry, sir, but the mistress is not yet in.

*Teddy* : Thank you so much for looking for her. Now if you will permit me to wait her return I will be extremely grateful.

*(Teddy, without waiting for her consent, walks around in the hall).*

*Maid* : Will you please wait in the drawing room ?

*Teddy* : Certainly.

*(Exit Maid and Teddy. One hears the Grandfather clock in the Hall strike one. Elizabeth opens the front door with a key. Saisy Blaunt, Kitty Brompton and Henry Brompton follow her into the hall. The ladies are in evening bright coloured velvet and silk wraps, displaying a glimpse of lavender, blue, and orchid silk dancing frocks.*

*Elizabeth* : Thank you heaps for bringing me home. The moon has disappeared and I would have been afraid in the dark alone. Remember that saying, " The bogeyman will get you if you don't watch out." Gracious, how just whispering that warning frightened me when I was little.

*Henry Brompton* : Don't be too sure, Elizabeth, a bogeyman may catch you now that you are big if you won't watch out.

*Elizabeth* : Hush, you scare me. Good night, friends.

*Saisy* : Not so quick with your good night. I want to visualize the man Charlotte has caught.

(Elizabeth *frowns*).

Elizabeth : Oh, Edward, why he isn't caught. Why he is a friend of the family. Good night.

Kitty : Tutt ! tutt ! Let us have a peep at him. Let us talk to him. If he is a friend of the family must he be only shared by the family ? Won't the family share him with their friends.?

Elizabeth : No, we are not communists, we are conservatives and will not share him with you.

(She *jovially pushes her friends out and shuts the door*).

Maid *enters and presents Elizabeth with the tray*.

Maid *is wearing her cap and her hair is neat*).

Maid : Mr. Hall wishes me to present his card and bids me inform you that he is a friend of Miss Hopkins.

(Elizabeth *takes the card and looks at it, and seems to be pleased*).

Elizabeth : When did he call ? Did he say when he would come again ? I am sorry I missed him. I wish I hadn't gone to that stupid dance. I never wanted to go, anyway.

(She *takes her wrap off and throws it over the chair*).

She *is wearing a pretty orchid-coloured frock*).

Maid : Why, he is in the drawing room now. Oh ! here he is already.

(Teddy *has entered unobserved by both Elizabeth and Agnes*. Maid *climbs the stairs, and disappears*).

Teddy : Pardon the late hour of my call, Miss Walker, but I hated the idea of missing the opportunity of meeting you, and besides I promised Miss Eleanor Hopkins that I would call on her charming friend while in Plymouth.

(Elizabeth *shakes hands with Teddy in a cordial manner*).

*Elizabeth* : How do you do ? Do you know my dear friend, Eleanor. Just like her to have lots of men friends and so kind of her to share one of them with me.

*Teddy* : Yes, she has often talked to me about you. She said that she knew that you were my ideal of a woman and that I must know you.

(*Elizabeth laughs*).

*Elizabeth* : I hope that your expectations are satisfied.

*Teddy* : You are far more lovely than I had hoped for. Besides your good looks you are affable and friendly, and those qualities mean so much to a stranger in a city.

*Elizabeth* : I would be delighted to take you sight-seeing, but, alas, you are leaving to-morrow.

*Teddy* : Maybe your charms will induce me to linger on a day or so.

*Elizabeth* : Let me hope that my charms will have that effect. But don't let me keep you standing. Please come to the sitting room, which is quite private, and where we will be the least subject to interruption.

*Teddy* : Oh ! how wonderful it is to receive hospitality, which I rarely receive in my profession !

(*Exit Teddy, following Elizabeth through the door at the extreme right*).

(*The curtain falls for a few minutes to represent a lapse of time*).

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### ACT III.

#### SCENE II.—*The Hall*.

(*Charlotte bursts through the front door into the Hall, dragging Edward in by the hand*).

*Edward* : It is indiscreet for me to enter at this ungodly

hour, Charlotte, look at the clock, I must return to my hotel at once.

*Charlotte*: Not before I announce our engagement to Elizabeth. (*She shouts up the stairs*): Elizabeth, come here, surely you have returned from the Bromptons' party. Come down to the hall. Can't you hear me? Put a kimono or a cloak on if you have retired. But come, I have some news for you.

(*Elizabeth enters*).

*Elizabeth*: I also have news for you.

(*Teddy enters*).

*Elizabeth*: I also have news for you. Let me introduce Mr. Hall, my bridegroom to be.

(*Charlotte opens her mouth wide*).

*Charlotte*: Where did you meet him? Who introduced you? When did you become engaged? At the party?

*Teddy*: I have felt that I have known Elizabeth a long time, and I have often gazed longingly at a photograph of her beautiful face. Her friend, Eleanor Hopkins, whom you also know, has often told me about her charms, and this evening, through her kindness, I have seen and have felt those charms. She is adorable, and to my great good fortune she has consented to be my wife. It is glorious when a woman falls in love at first sight *a la* Juliette.

*Edward*: He speaks as if it were more his doing than hers. I never heard of such an open declaration of love in England.

*Charlotte*: Hush, Edward, this is not the night for such a cynical remark. It is the kind an old married man makes when he has forgotten his strenuous wooing.

(*Edward sighs*).

*Charlotte*: Come, Elizabeth, felicitate me and congratu-

late Edward *a la mode*.

*Elizabeth*: Oh, you are engaged. What a surprise! Ah, well, sister dear, I congratulate you on winning Edward, and Edward I felicitate you.

As for my engagement it has come with a complete rush on my side and has quite carried me off my feet.

*(Charlotte frowns. A knocking is heard at the front door. Elizabeth opens the door to the left. Beth Fuller enters. All gaze in astonishment at a thin, pale, pretty girl, with brown hair blowing about her face. Her eyes wear an anxious stare. She has a dark travelling cloak around her and no hat).*

*Beth*: Edward, I have found you at last. So this is the business affair which carried you away from our announcement party.

*Teddy*: Why! What an evening of engagements!

*Edward*: Beth, how on earth did you find your way here? How did you know where I went?

*Beth*: I was distracted when I received your letter telling me that you had been suddenly called away on business to Plymouth, and that you were extremely sorry that you couldn't attend our engagement party. The guests were all assembled when your note came. I simply couldn't face them with no fiancé. I rushed to my room, threw this cloak around me, and ran to your lodgings to ask your landlady your address in Plymouth.

*Edward*: Silly! How could you expect my landlady to know my business?

*Beth*: Well, she said: "If he has gone to Plymouth he probably has gone to the Miss Walkers' house. He hasn't visited there for some time but he does still receive letters from Miss Charlotte Walker." With that she searched in

the waste paper basket and at last produced a piece of an old letter bearing this address. I took it and hurried to the station, caught the train, and here I am. Now what have you to say for yourself ?

*Edward* : I received a telegram this afternoon requesting my presence immediately at the home of old friends, and, expecting them to be in dire distress I came here. Is that not true, Elizabeth and Charlotte ? (Elizabeth and Charlotte *nod their heads in assent*). But as for you, Beth, you have done a most compromising act to chase after a man after midnight, no matter how wrong his offence.

*Beth* : I couldn't help coming. I was so worried and chagrined at your absence from my party. Imagine my humiliating position, Edward. Come, take me home.

(*Edward starts to leave with Beth, but Charlotte shuts the door to prevent their leaving*).

*Charlotte* : You fools, you would compromise yourselves still further by returning home in the morning. Look at the hour. It is 4 a.m. Besides, I can't allow my fiancé to escort a young lady home.

*Edward* : Surely you can't insinuate that I am your fiancé when you know that I have been secretly engaged to Beth for months.

*Charlotte* : Beth is a stranger to me. I have known you long before you ever worked in Eastbourne. Besides, you have engaged yourself to me this very evening. Come with me, Edward dear, into the conservatory, and we will talk things over in private.

(*Beth starts to cry*).

*Edward* : Please let go of my arm, Charlotte. I feel sorry for Beth. Look, she is nearly crying. I am going with her.



*Charlotte*: Ha! ha! ha! She is weeping because she is losing her present prospect of marriage. She doesn't love you. She loves the institution, marriage.

*Edward*: I expect you are right. Her grief is probably due to the fear of the humiliation of being an old maid, as well as losing a fiancé.

*(Beth weeps and Charlotte smiles).*

*Edward*: But I also suspect you, Charlotte, of the same love for that historic institution, marriage. I won't have either of you on such terms. I want real love for myself, the man. Good night, all. I am through with women for the present, anyway.

*(Exit Edward through the front door. Elizabeth puts her arm tight round Teddy. Teddy looks interested in the proceedings).*

*Elizabeth*: Well, Charlotte, I expect you will have to go to Australia to teach after all, since you have failed to win a husband to support you. As for me I can give up my library work and can lean on Teddy for support.

*(Beth sits down and continues to cry).*

*Charlotte*: I think I will go to Australia and will teach until I am married. Men are strong and big out there, and there will be many far more desirable than Edward. After all I don't care much for Edward, not more than for other men, when I come to think of it. Get up, Beth, stop moping for a shadow, join me and sail to Australia. There are plenty of fish there for both of us. I have seen lots of advertisements asking women to come because the surplus of men need housewives. I have seen two such pictures calling for us at Wembley this summer. We won't quarrel there, the way we do in England, over one. Instead they will be fighting for us.

(Beth looks up with hope in her expression. Teddy scratches his head).

Teddy: I didn't know, Elizabeth, that you worked and made those pretty fingers dusty.

Elizabeth: Why, I work of course, to earn enough to feed Charlotte and to provide for me. What with the inheritance tax, death duties and house and land taxes and income tax, we have precious little left. We still have our big house to live in, if that is what you are thinking of.

Teddy: My mind is a bit muddled, and I think I will leave you.

Elizabeth: You can't desert me, you are my man and will support me. I need you. I want you. (She grabs hold of him).

Teddy: I think not when you learn that I am a burglar by profession.

(Teddy jumps out of a window).

Elizabeth: I almost was caught by a bogeyman.

(All look thunderstruck).

(The curtain falls).

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